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WEEKEND, December 21-23, 2012

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JAN. 10-13
QUEEN ELIZABETH THEATRE

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—Broadway World

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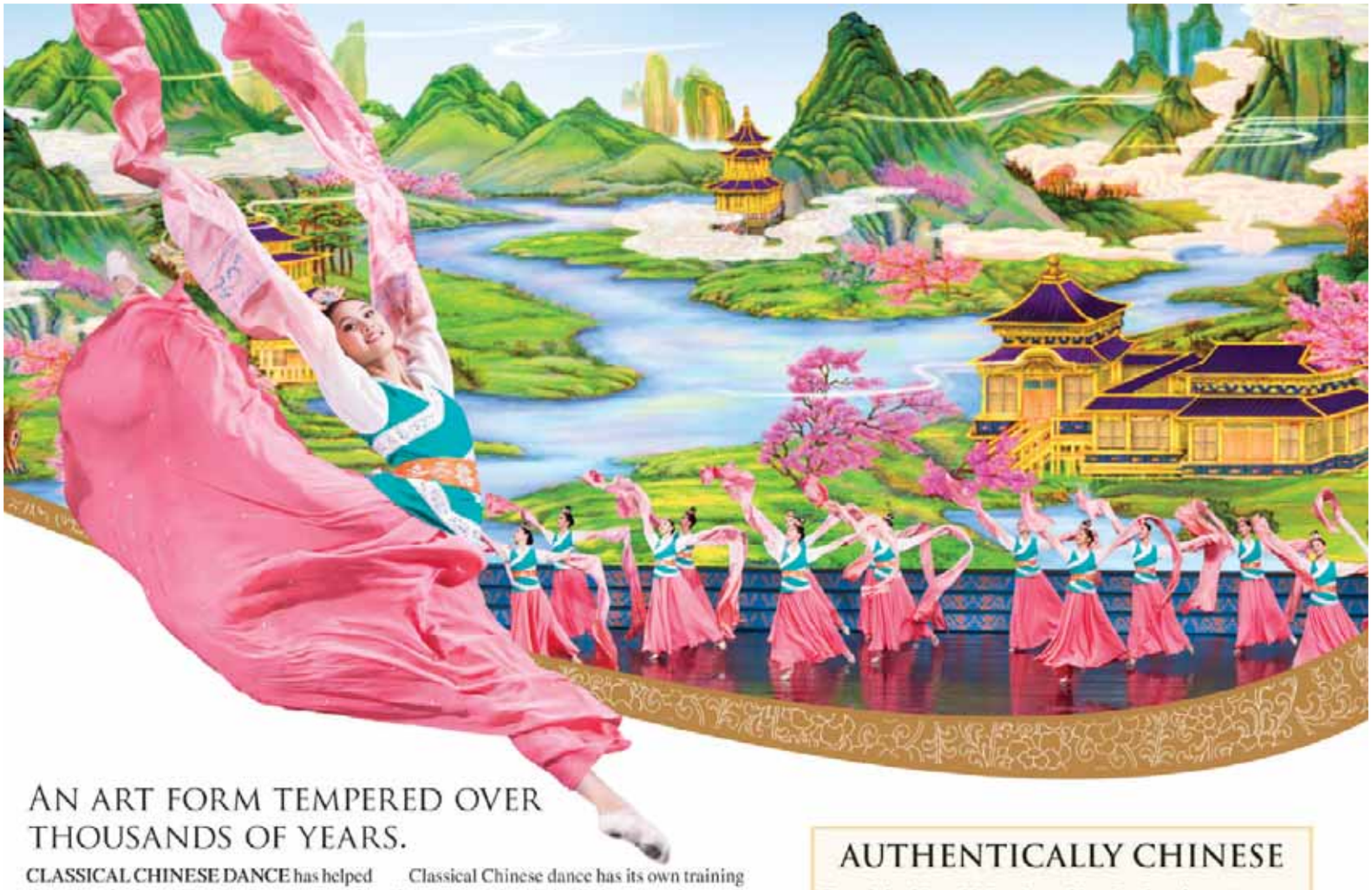

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Based in New York, Shen Yun Performing Arts was founded with the mission to restore 5,000 years of divinely inspired Chinese culture, which has been mostly destroyed in China under communist rule. In fact, a show like Shen Yun can no longer be found in China today.

"I have reviewed over 3,000 shows. None can compare to what I saw tonight. Five stars... The Top!"
—Richard Connema, renowned Broadway critic

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—Christine Walevska, "goddess of the cello"

"It's a new realm of dance—there's a lot of depth to it, and a lot of meaning."
—Vanessa Harwood, Officer of Order of Canada, former principal dancer of the National Ballet of Canada

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—Kenn Wells, former lead dancer of the English National Ballet

"It was absolutely marvellous. It's a magnificent show – spectacular. The imagination behind it and the creativity is incredible."
— Dr. Irving Guttman, founder of Vancouver Opera, Member of the Order of Canada

"It has transcended the technique, they're performing through their spirit, ... it's a breath of fresh air."
—Elvis Stojko, world figure skating championw

JAN. 10–13

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Yaohan Centre - near Osaka Supermarket

Wishing you the best of the season

Metro will not be publishing until Dec. 26. Watch for our special Boxing Day preview of 2013.

THE YEAR THAT WAS ... ACCORDING TO CLARK

ECONOMY STILL TOP OF MIND FOR PREMIER AS SHE REFLECTS ON 2012 AND LOOKS AHEAD TO ELECTION PAGE 4

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WEEKEND, December 21-23, 2012

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Deck the halls with boughs of ugly

Bad taste for good cause. City establishes Ugly Christmas Sweater Day as proponents look to spread holiday cheer

KATE WEBB
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What started out as a hokey high school theme party 11 years ago in the Tri-Cities and later morphed into a sold-out annual Christmas tradition at the Commodore Ballroom now has its own day in Vancouver.

Mayor Gregor Robertson has proclaimed Friday the first-ever Ugly Christmas Sweater Day at the request of the city's signature sweater-party founders, Jordan Birch and Chris Boyd.

"We feel that the sweater — it's not just a trend or a fad or a fashion statement. We call it the Ugly Christmas Sweater because we feel it symbolizes Christmas spirit," Birch told Metro on Thursday.

"Our core values, or the four elements of Christmas spirit that the sweater represents, would be to connect with those that matter, give to those less fortunate, reconnect with someone you were once close to and be kind to everyone."

This year's sold-out soirée on the Granville strip will attract 1,100 terribly dressed but very cosy revellers to dance, drink and be merry, and it has already raised nearly $20,000 for various worthy causes.

In keeping with the four elements of the Christmas spirit, Birch and Boyd have also been performing one small act of kindness every day for the past 21 leading up to the big night.

They said the city's stamp of approval will help them spread their message.

"It now gives everybody an opportunity to participate, so you don't necessarily have to have a ticket to the benefit to be a part of it," Birch said.

"You can put it on and you can live out those four elements and do something without expecting anything in return."

Follow Kate Webb on Twitter @MetroK8

Online

Visit metronews.ca on Saturday to see a gallery chock full of photos of ugly Christmas sweaters that Metro readers have generously submitted.

Chris Boyd, left, and Jordan Birch kick off their 11th annual Ugly Christmas Sweater Party at the Commodore Ballroom Friday night. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

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NEWS 1

STIs. 'Tis the season for... chlamydia?

You might not know it, but someone may have given you chlamydia as an early Christmas present.

Nearly 12,000 cases of the sexually transmitted infection were reported in B.C. in 2011, making chlamydia by far the most reported infectious disease in the province, according to a report released this week by the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Only 2,000 cases were reported of the second most frequent disease, which was hepatitis C.

Doctors aren't sure why chlamydia is on the rise, but the number of cases has risen steadily since 1999. (Though at 11,730, there were about 100 fewer cases in 2011 than the previous year.)

The increase could possibly be related to behaviour changes, more frequent testing or better testing technology, said Dr. Mark Gilbert, a physician and epidemiologist at the disease-control centre.

The spike in chlamydia can be seen in most higher-income countries, he said, including the U.S. and many in Europe.

Studies of youth and gay men, higher risk groups, indicate that people are having sex later and are more likely to use condoms, Gilbert said.

Young women are most at risk of contracting chlamydia, but many people of both sexes don't experience symptoms.

Sexually active people should get tested routinely as untreated chlamydia can cause pelvic inflammation and infertility problems, Gilbert said.

"Obviously, we always recommend using condoms," he added.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

The College of Pharmacists of British Columbia wants to ban loyalty points or any incentive when it comes to prescription drugs. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

End to loyalty points for prescriptions near?

College of Pharmacists of British Columbia. Province may ban getting points for prescription drugs by mid-2013

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

Do you like collecting loyalty points when filling a prescription?

If the College of Pharmacists of British Columbia gets its way, you won't be able to by mid-2013.

It wants to follow in Ontario and Quebec's footsteps and to ban loyalty points for prescription drugs in case the bonus provides an incentive to misuse drugs.

The problem arises when a doctor prescribes a drug but the patient waits for a certain day to get special points, college spokesman Mykle Ludvigsen said. A minor illness could turn into something more major, he said, even though he recognizes the "overwhelming majority" of people wouldn't make a decision based on points.

"Our concern is with the minority of people who do make those decisions based on loyalty points and do put their health at risk," he said.

The college argues that incentives encourage the overfilling and overuse of prescription drugs. It's also against loyalty programs tracking patients for marketing. Alberta pharmacists are also pursuing such a prohibition.

But there's no evidence to support the college's fears, said Mitchell Merowitz, the vice-president of Air Miles Reward Program, pointing to research from pharmacists in Saskatchewan.

"We think it's anti-consumer and anti-competitive," Merowitz said of the proposed ban, noting that two-thirds were against it in a recent survey conducted for his company of 1,000 B.C. residents.

Elsie Lee, a pharmacist of 20 years, also disagrees with the ban. Loyalty points simply don't interfere with patient care, she said.

"All the decisions I make are with the best interest of the patient," she said.

Besides, customers at the Port Coquitlam Safeway where she works get seven times the Air Miles every day.

"It's not a big draw, but it's nice to have a small reward," she said. "Most people save it up for Christmas."

People have until Dec. 28 to comment on the proposed ban. Thousands have responded already. The college will analyze the feedback before its board decides whether to go forward.

The minister of health will then have the chance to pass the provincial bylaw or strike it down.

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JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO FILE

CHRISTY CLARK

Bring it on, NDP. The B.C. Liberal premier says she's ready for next May's election, despite polls that aren't in her favour. After a year of high-profile resignations from her party and mounting criticism, Clark is still determined to work for the province. "If it's going to be an uphill battle, that's OK," she told Metro in a year-end interview. "I'm ready for it."

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

REFLECTING ON 2012

On the most significant issue of 2012:

"The biggest issue has been making sure that British Columbia continues to be stable and growing, despite a very fragile economy," she said.

She wants to keep taxes low to attract investment. "It's just the real bread-and-butter issues of trying to grow our economy, keep people working in a world where millions of people are unemployed and under-employed."

She expects the economy to top her agenda in 2013, too.

On the not-so-positive poll results:

Clark believes her focus on jobs and the economy will convince people to stick with the Liberals in the election. "What people will ask themselves when they go to the polls in May is 'Who's best to look after my economic future?'"

She cites her travels to Asia, where she sealed business deals with companies such as Mitsubishi, as indicative of her ability to create jobs.

"My government has been a pretty good economic manager. We haven't been perfect, but we are doing way better in B.C. than almost anywhere else in North America."

On her lack of support from women:

Polls may suggest that women are leaning left, but Clark said she hasn't noticed a gender gap among her supporters.

One contentious issue is that women in B.C. make less than the Canadian average, according to a Simon Fraser University study critical of the Liberals' labour policies.

Clark is trying to get more women working in the trades, a move that could equalize wages, she said. More jobs in mining and natural gas will boost the number of well-paid jobs in B.C. in general, she added.

Women care just as much about B.C.'s economic future as men, she said, and she's confident that's what will be on peoples' minds as they head to the polls.

What do the polls say?

According to the most recent Angus Reid poll, released on Nov. 23:

- **Voting intention:**
  - **47 per cent** of British Columbians said they will vote NDP.
  - **29 per cent** said they will vote Liberal.
- **Approval ratings:**
  - **48 per cent** favoured NDP Leader Adrian Dix.
  - **29 per cent** favoured Premier Christy Clark.
- **Best premier:**
  - **28 per cent** said Dix would make a better premier.
  - **16 per cent** said Clark would make be better.

On the Missing Women Inquiry recommendations:

Clark will "certainly pursue a discussion" about a regional police force.

"It requires consultation with municipal governments," she said. "Some of them haven't been as enthusiastic about it as others, but I think we all need to be open to it."

Her government appointed Steven Point to make sure the report's recommendations are implemented, so she doesn't see the need for the bipartisan task force suggested by NDP Leader Adrian Dix.

While she "certainly agrees that we have to make sure the task-force recommendations are acted on," she said it's better to have a champion (such as Steven Point) than bickering bureaucrats.

On transit in Surrey and Vancouver:

The province has lived up to its responsibility by investing $20 billion in roads and bridges, Clark said. But transit is a municipal responsibility, she added, and municipal taxes keep rising.

"Those mayors need to figure out how to fulfil their responsibility," she said. "It's their job. I'm going to leave it up to them."

On her rocky relationship with Alberta Premier Alison Redford:

"I'd much rather do my job and fight for the people here than make sure all the other premiers in the country like me," she said.

The Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline proposal is too risky and doesn't offer enough economic benefits to B.C., she said. Her plans to develop natural gas will benefit B.C. and its environment much more, she added.

"No one has seen a duck wash up on the shore covered in natural gas."

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Hold on to your phones, police warn

Reminder. Awareness campaign includes baseball-style cards with safety tips and digits

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
phylicia.torrevillas@metronews.ca

Transit police want you to ho, ho, hold onto your cellphones and electronic devices.

They are reminding transit users, especially those consumed in the Christmas hustle and bustle, to stay alert and keep their possessions safe in a new awareness campaign launched Thursday.

Device Advice involves Transit police, Canada Line, SkyTrain, West Coast Express and SeaBus attendants handing out 10,000 baseball-style cards containing safety tips and numbers to call if they get into trouble.

Cellphone thefts and robberies of electronic devices such as iPads and tablets are under-reported crimes, but are happening at an alarming rate all across North America, said Transit police spokeswoman Anne Drennan.

"The (Metro Vancouver) police departments are telling us that 70 per cent of all cellphone and electronic-device thefts are what they call on-ground offences," Drennan told reporters at Vancouver's Waterfront Station. "They're stolen from people while they're milling about, while they're standing on platforms, and while they're out on the street."

Police caution people not to lend their phones or devices to strangers, to keep their possessions close and not to draw too much attention to them at all times.

Tips

Transit police spokeswoman Anne Drennan urged witnesses to contact Transit police or Crime Stoppers.

- More suspects could be tracked down if thefts are reported with suspect description, the date, time, and location.
- "We have the luxury at times of using a lot of video.... That's why we want more people to report it and more witnesses to give us information because we know it will make a difference in terms of the arrests we make," she said.

SkyTrain attendant Eric Tolen hands out baseball-style cards containing safety tips and important contact numbers to passengers Thursday as part of the Device Advice program. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

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Top international story.
Obama wins re-election

Yes, he could — again.

While some pundits made out like it was going to be a close race between U.S. President Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, one former poker shark and statistician knew otherwise. New York Times blogger Nate Silver correctly predicted Obama would win the election

Hee was off by a bit, though — Silver predicted Obama would win 51 per cent of the popular vote on Nov. 6. He actually won with 50.96 per cent.

After a hard-fought campaign, Romney was backed by 47.28 per cent of Americans — presumably the 47 per cent who aren't, in the Republican candidate's own words, "dependent on government" or "believe that they are entitled to health care, to food, or housing."

International stories

Top international stories as voted by Metro readers:

1. U.S. election
2. Hurricane Sandy
2. Syria
4. Newtown school shooting

According to an Associated Press-GfK poll, one month after the election Obama's approval rating stood at 57 per cent, the highest since May 2011 when Navy SEALs killed Osama bin Laden, and up five points from before the election.

KATE WEBB/METRO WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Top national story.
A grisly crime

It was a murder so gruesome it dominated headlines across the country and around the world for weeks.

When 33-year-old Chinese student Jun Lin's severed torso was found in a suitcase in Montreal in May it sparked an international manhunt for Luka Rocco Magnotta, a fame-obsessed former porn star and model from Scarborough, Ont.

The same day, a foot was found in package mailed to the Conservative party in Ottawa and a hand was found in package in a Canada Post warehouse.

Montreal police later confirmed they had video showing a man tied to bed being killed, dismembered, and his corpse defiled, which made rounds on the Internet.

Six days after the discovery of Lin's torso, Magnotta was arrested in a café in Berlin and charged with first-degree murder, committing indignity to a dead body, mailing obscene material and criminally harassing the prime minister and several unidentified members of Parliament. Lin's other hand and foot turned up in packages addressed to two Vancouver elementary schools.

KATE WEBB/METRO WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

International stories

Top national stories as voted by Metro readers:

1. Luka Magnotta
2. Rob Ford loses his job
2. F-35 financial fiasco
2. NHL lockout
2. Quebec student protests

Carol and Norm Todd speak to a crowd at Riverside Secondary in Port Coquitlam Dec. 9 following the inaugural Snowflake Walk named after their daughter Amanda, who took her own life in October after repeated harassment and bullying. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO FILE

Top local story: Amanda Todd's death

Survey says. Metro polled readers on which stories grabbed their attention this year, and these are the results

KATE WEBB
kate.webb@metronews.ca

The verdict is still out on what the legacy will be of the exploited, bullied, depressed Port Coquitlam teen who made the decision to end her own life on Oct. 10.

UBC suicidologist David Klonsky said Amanda Todd's suicide has the potential to spur society to take action to prevent other teens from making the same mistake.

"It depends in large part how the community reacts," he said. "Something that's protective against suicide risk is a sense of community and a sense of belongingness, so if people reached out to each other, especially the B.C. community, that could be protective against people acting on suicidal thoughts or feelings."

After the story broke, the B.C. government released a smartphone app that allows kids to report bullying anonymously, and moved forward with its ERASE bullying strategy to train more educators, which was already in the works.

Port Coquitlam city council is also putting together what could become B.C.'s first anti-bullying bylaw.

But another potential consequence of all the media attention is the risk of copycats. There is a large body of research documenting a contagion effect after high-profile suicides among people of the same sex and age as the deceased.

B.C. coroner Barb McLintock said so far it does not look like the province has experienced such an effect, but it is too soon to say for sure. Since Oct. 10 there have been seven suicides by youths ages 13 to 20 in B.C., compared to 10 in the same period last year, but those numbers do not take into account suicide attempts or reports of suicidal ideation, which are not tracked.

Local stories

Top local stories as voted by Metro readers:

1. Amanda Todd's suicide
2. Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline
3. Missing Women Inquiry
3. RCMP harassment lawsuit
5. New Port Mann Bridge

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Zoinks! Mystery Machine sells for $5K

Mystery Machine. Vancouverite wins eBay bidding war to own the iconic van associated with Shaggy and the gang

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
phylicia.torrevillas@metronews.ca

Scott Bandy has had people crowding around his driveway since purchasing his sweet new ride — Scooby Doo and the gang's Mystery Machine.

He won a one-week bidding war on eBay for the 1994 Chevy G10 that was used in the 2009 Vancouver-shot TV-movie Scooby Doo! The Mystery Begins.

Bandy, who works at a local pizza shop, paid $5,111 for the much-photographed van.

"I thought it would be a good, reliable van that wouldn't depreciate in value the same way most vehicles would," he told Metro Thursday.

"I also realized I needed a van because I just need to haul a lot of things. I play in bands around town and bring gear from place to place so why not buy the Mystery Machine?"

Those meddling kids

$7,899

The winning eBay bid would have been $7,899 but it was retracted because it was allegedly placed by a seven-year-old boy.

Bandy said he's had to ask people taking photos of his van to move back so he could get out of his driveway.

The van's former owner, Andy Rankin, originally asked for $2,000 and didn't expect the bidding war to get so intense.

According to Rankin, there was even an interested buyer from England, who placed a bid of around $3,500.

"I asked him how much it would cost to ship. He said he figured it would be around $5,000 to ship it out," he said.

How will he spend the money from selling the van he's had for four years?

"It's Christmas time, I'll spend a bit of it for family," Rankin said.

"I'm also flying off to Ontario. That'll take care of my plane ticket and then some."

Follow Phylicia Torrevillas on Twitter @ptorrevillas

Andy Rankin dropped off the Mystery Machine, the popular van used by Scooby Doo and the gang, to its new owner Monday. The van sold for $5,111 on eBay. JENNIFER GAULTIER/METRO FILE

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1923 1¢	$14.00 and up

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Canada 1967	$13.88
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Hope in the Shadows. A season to celebrate for cancer survivor

This is Katrina Laboucan's favourite time of year.

The 49-year-old mother of two takes to the streets selling Downtown Eastside Hope in the Shadows calendars.

It's a chance for her to get out of the house and meet dozens of people each day, a chance to share a laugh or tell a story.

It's also a chance to count her blessings.

"Getting out is a great thing for me," she said. "Two years ago, I couldn't even walk. I've been on disability because I was diagnosed with Phase 3 breast cancer."

It wasn't any easier for her family.

Her husband, who is HIV-positive, was extremely sick at the time, and everything seemed to be falling apart.

Well, everything except for the Laboucan family spirit.

"My family kept me going; I wouldn't have survived without them," said Laboucan. "(My) kids are my best friends, and my husband has been a rock and (has been) helping me along."

Today, everyone is in good health and is loving life.

Laboucan's husband also sells Hope in the Shadows calendars, allowing the family to take home 50 per cent of the proceeds.

"It's nice to have some extra money for this time of year," she said. "But what I like is talking about the calendar with people. They think it's great that it's put together by homeless and low-income people and feel good about buying one. It's a nice way to say Merry Christmas."

The Hope in the Shadows calendar is on sale for $20 at street vendors around Vancouver. MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

Quoted

"As long as they keep putting together the calendars, I'll be there."

Katrina Laboucan

Studies. Homelessness and sexual abuse linked to youth drug use

Youth are far more likely to shoot up when faced with homelessness or a history of sexual abuse, new studies suggest.

Two studies from the B.C. Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS confirm that both circumstances put youth at a greater risk of using intravenous injection drugs for the first time.

Research based off the centre's At-Risk Youth Study — involving Vancouver youth aged 14 to 26 — found homeless youth were nearly twice as likely to inject drugs than those who are not homeless.

Youth who have experienced childhood sexual abuse were more than 2.5 times more likely to start injecting drugs than those who have not been victims.

The studies were published in the Journal of Adolescent Health and the journal Preventive Medicine, respectively.

Dr. Kora DeBeck said the studies can help guide policy aimed at early-childhood prevention.

The homelessness study, funded by the U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse and the Canadian Institutes of Health Researchers, involved 422 street youth between Sept. 2005 and Nov. 2011.

The Preventive Medicine study was led by Dr. Scott Hadland of the Harvard-affiliated Boson Children's Hospital and studied 395 youth from Oct. 2005 to Nov. 2010.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

Kootenays

Enviros alarmed by coal-mine proposal

Three environmental groups are sounding the alarm over plans for an open-pit coal mine in the Elk Valley in Southeast B.C.

The groups say the Bingay project proposed by Centermount Coal would jeopardize a crucial international wildlife corridor that the United Nations has sought protection for. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Multiple gunshots fired

Man surrenders on firearms charges

A 36-year-old man has turned himself in at the Nanaimo provincial court after a warrant was issued for his arrest in connection with multiple gunshots being fired at a home in July.

Jeffrey Ryan Oud has been released with stringent conditions and faces mischief and firearms charges. He is scheduled to appear in court on Jan. 8.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Mary Polak and Transportation Investment Corporation CEO Mike Proudfoot said contractors are fixing the Port Mann Bridge after ice fell on cars Wednesday. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/METRO

Contractors at fault for damage: Minister

Port Mann Bridge 'ice bombs'. Minister calls danger on Highway 1 'absolutely unacceptable'

Quoted

"In spite of the terrible thing we saw on the bridge yesterday, these are world-renowned contractors and designers."

Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Mary Polak

CARA MCKENNA
vancouver@metronews.ca

Contractors are responsible for "ice bombs" damaging about 100 cars on the Port Mann Bridge Wednesday and they're also responsible for remedying the situation, according to B.C.'s transportation minister and the CEO of the company that runs the bridge.

The $3.3-billion bridge was closed for hours Wednesday after windshields were smashed and people were injured by chunks of ice falling from overhead bridge wires.

It had been open for two weeks.

"When you purchase a car, you rely on those who constructed and designed the car to provide you with a vehicle that works as you would expect," said Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Mary Polak.

"(Wednesday's) events on the Port Mann Bridge were absolutely unacceptable."

Kiewet-Flatiron, the contracting company hired to design and build the bridge, released a statement Thursday saying they're "very concerned about weather issues impacting motorists on the Port Mann Bridge."

Mike Proudfoot, CEO of Transportation Investment Corporation, said he has been working with ICBC to pay the deductibles of people who had their cars damaged.

He added that engineers are working "feverishly" to find solutions.

"Every effort is being made to ensure the bridge stays open," said Proudfoot.

"Frankly, for the last couple weeks (before this), everything has worked out very well."

Proudfoot added there is plastic sheeting on the cables meant to deter the accumulation of snow and ice. He said TIC will be looking into manual, mechanical, heat and vibration techniques to prevent future incidents.

"Provisions were made; they have not been adequate, and solutions will be found."

One person was taken to the hospital after ice smashed their car windshield on the bridge yesterday afternoon.

They were treated and have now been released.

"In spite of the terrible thing we saw on the bridge yesterday, these are world-renowned contractors and designers," said Polak.

A photo of CJ Morningstar Fowler is displayed as her father Glen Wilson wipes away his tears during a news conference in Vancouver last week. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO FILE

RCMP release photo taken of girl just hours before her murder

The RCMP have released a surveillance photo taken of a 16-year-old girl just hours before she was murdered in Kamloops, in hopes it will bring in more tips in the case.

The body of CJ Fowler was found in a ravine on Dec. 5, not long after her image was captured by a camera while she was at Royal Inland Hospital around 3 a.m.

Police say the evidence shows Fowler was murdered before dawn.

The photo shows Fowler in a hallway of the hospital, wearing blue jeans and a green jacket over a pink hoodie and another jacket that's black and grey plaid.

Police say they want to hear from anyone who may have seen Fowler between the hospital and where she was found in the ravine.

Fowler, who had been visiting Kamloops, had a bus ticket to her hometown of Terrace when her body was discovered.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Neighbourhood's 'little gem' to be lost in greenway plan

Unhappy. Some people are upset path will be changed in the construction of the Comox-Helmcken greenway

Some residents are heartbroken that "a neighbourhood treasure" will be lost as pre-construction began on the city's $5.46-million plan for a Comox-Helmcken greenway connecting Burrard Street to Stanley Park.

As part of the plan, the path that connects the cul-de-sac at the end of Comox Street to Stanley Park will be developed into a wider, bike- and pedestrian-friendly lane.

Resident Val Lemaitre is unhappy with the city's decision to widen the narrow passage she describes as the neighbourhood's "little gem" used by seniors, parents and children.

"Our little paradise, they're taking it away from us," she told Metro on Thursday.

It was only Dec. 12 that city council voted unanimously to proceed with the plan so Lemaitre said she was surprised to see that city workers have already put stakes and markers on the path and cut down tree branches.

According to the teacher, it's a waste of money since there's already an existing bike path to Stanley Park one block north.

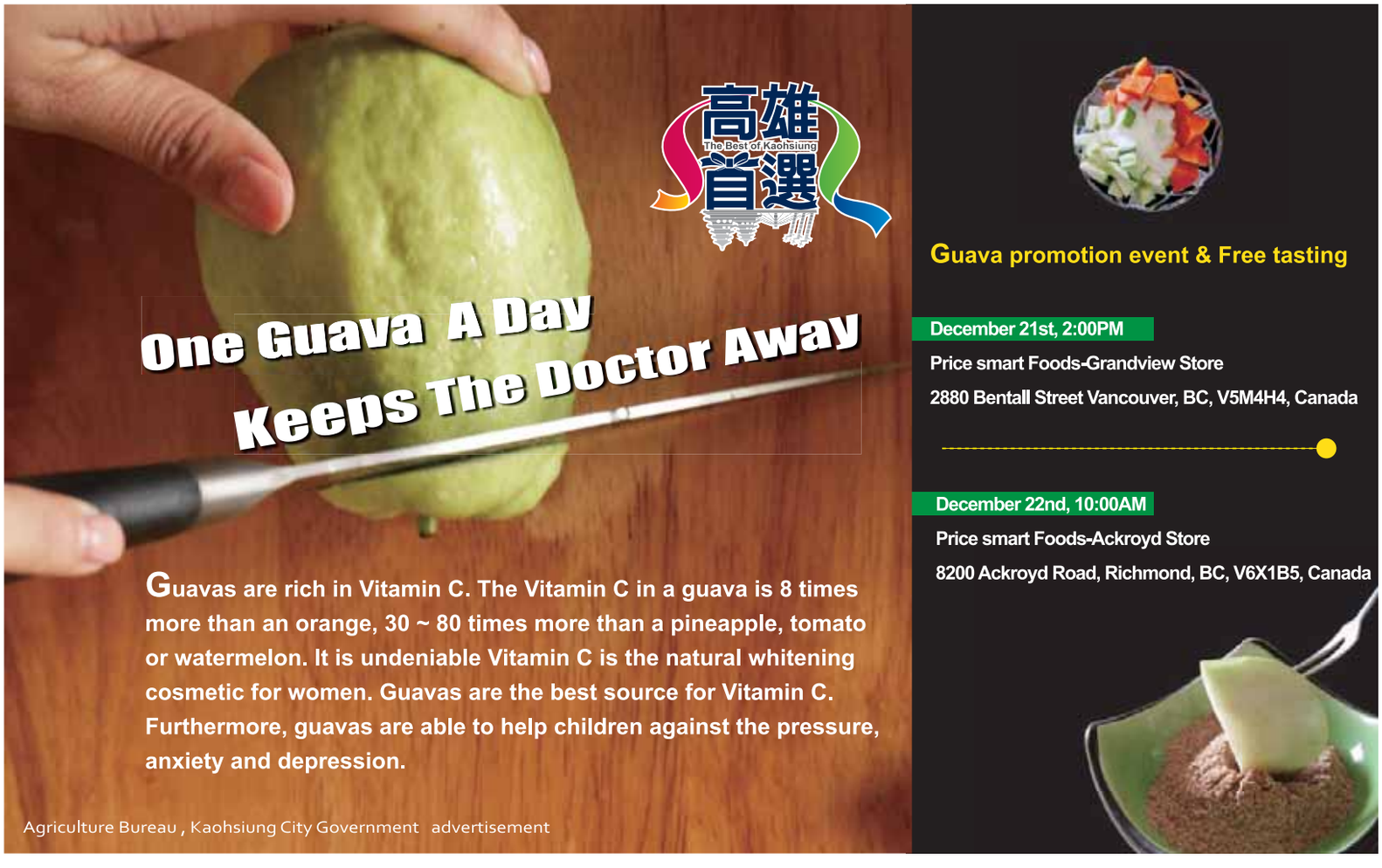
"I don't think you take green away to make manufactured green," Lemaitre said.

Vancouver city transportation director Jerry Dobrovolny said surveyors have been out checking the route.

"(The) parks board has done some prep work because there's a tight deadline to get the work done in the park so it doesn't affect the herons' nesting or breeding, so that's on the fast track," he said. "We're expecting to be out right after the New Year in full force starting the job."

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Val Lemaitre is upset with the city's plan to widen the narrow passage that connects the cul-de-sac at the end of Comox Street to Stanley Park as part of the under-construction Comox-Helmcken greenway. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO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The best defence ... Teachers at Texas school to carry firearms

In the tiny Texas town of Harrold, children and their parents don't give much thought to safety at the community's lone school — mostly because some of the teachers are carrying concealed weapons.

The nearest sheriff's office is 30 minutes away, and people tend to know — and trust — one another. So the school board voted to let teachers bring guns to school.

"We don't have money for a security guard, but this is a better solution," superintendent David Thweatt said. "A shooter could take out a guard or officer with a visible, holstered weapon, but our teachers have master's degrees, are older and have had extensive training. And their guns are hidden. We can protect our children."

In the awful aftermath of last week's Connecticut elementary school shooting, lawmakers in a growing number of states — including Oklahoma, Missouri, Minnesota, South Dakota and Oregon — have said they will consider laws allowing teachers and school administrators to carry firearms at school.

Community support

"I think it's a great idea for trained teachers to carry weapons.... But I hate that it has come to this."

CaRae Reinisch, resident of Elliott, a town near Harold

Texas law bans guns in schools unless the school has given written authorization. Arizona and six other states have similar laws with exceptions for people who have licenses to carry concealed weapons.

Harrold's school board voted unanimously in 2007 to allow employees to carry weapons. After obtaining a state concealed-weapons permit, each employee who wants to carry a weapon must be approved by the board based on his or her personality and reaction to a crisis, Thweatt said.

Employees also must undergo training-in-crisis intervention and hostage situations.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gun control

NRA to comment on gun violence

Now that President Barack Obama has demanded "real action, right now" against U.S. gun violence, attention turned Thursday to the coming "major news conference" by the country's top gun lobby, whose power for years has contributed to the political hesitation around the issue.

The National Rifle Association has promised to make its announcement Friday — the last real work day before Washington, and the rest of the country, scatters for the long Christmas holiday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gun charges

Sask. politician appears in court

A former Saskatoon mayoral candidate has appeared in court to face charges related to an alleged disagreement at a bar.

Clay Mazurkewich, who came in a distant third in October's municipal election, is accused of possessing weapons dangerous to the public.

Al Werner, a customer at the Coachman Lounge, says he and Mazurkewich were having a disagreement Wednesday when the would-be politician pulled out a gun.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Slain teacher protected students from gunman

Mourners exit a church in Katonah, N.Y., after the funeral for Anne Marie Murphy on Thursday. Murphy was killed when Adam Lanza walked into Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., Dec. 14, and opened fire.

LINDSAY NIEGELBERG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sandy Hook shooting. 52-year-old one of six educators killed in Newtown massacre

A teacher who authorities said died trying to protect her students in the Connecticut school shooting that left 28 people dead was laid to rest Thursday.

Anne Marie Murphy, 52, was remembered as a teacher who "brought together a community, a nation, a world, now awed by her own life and death," in a eulogy by Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York.

Murphy's father, Hugh McGowan, said authorities told him that she died trying to protect her young pupils. Her body was found covering a group of children's bodies as if to shield them, McGowan said.

About 15 people arrived at St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Katonah, N.Y., in a yellow school bus with "Newtown," the name of the Connecticut town where the shooting occurred, written on its side. The church quickly filled and about 100 mourners waited outside.

A Justice Department official said the country's top lawyer, Attorney General Eric Holder, would visit the town Thursday to meet privately with first responders and law-enforcement officials.

At least nine funerals and wakes were held Wednesday for those who died when 20-year-old gunman Adam Lanza, armed with a military-style assault rifle, broke into Sandy Hook Elementary School and opened fire. He killed six adults and 20 children, all of them six or seven years old.

More tributes were scheduled for Friday and Saturday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Archbishop

"Annie's life and death brings light, truth ... and love to a world often shrouded in darkness ..."

Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York

Volunteer veteran stands guard at California school

A Marine veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan took up self-imposed duty in front of a central California elementary school in the wake of the Connecticut shooting.

Hughson Elementary School Principal Laura Fong said Sgt. Craig Pusley stood all day Wednesday in fatigues in front of the flag pole at the school just southeast of Modesto. He was not armed.

Pusley, who served two tours in Iraq and one in Afghanistan before leaving active duty last year, told Fong that "he wanted to make the kids feel safe in light of what happened at Sandy Hook Elementary," the principal said.

The veteran Marine arrived at the K-3 school a little before 7:30 a.m., Fong said, and asked permission to stand guard.

Sgt. Pusley is a father of a three-year-old and his wife is expecting another child. He told the Modesto Bee that he decided to take action after reading a Facebook post urging soldiers to be posted at every school in the wake of last week's tragic shooting in Connecticut.

"When I enlisted, I swore to defend this country from all enemies, foreign and domestic," Sgt. Pusley said. "I just want to be sure all these kids go home safe for Christmas."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Sgt. Craig Pusley stands guard as kindergarten student Liset Corona, 5, walks to her class at Hughson Elementary School on Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Marineland. Inspectors set to take a look at animal graves

The Ontario Environment Ministry is poised this week for a sweeping inspection of Marineland's mass graves of animals — graves it had no idea existed because the park has no permits.

Former staff members say the Niagara Falls tourist attraction has dug pits for decades to dispose of its animals, using heavy machinery to cover them.

There are four mass graves, two of which contain "more than 1,000 animals," said Marineland's former land-animal supervisor Jim Hammond.

Asked Wednesday if it has permits for its animal graves, Marineland spokesperson Ann Marie Rondinelli wrote in an email: "One of life's sad truths is that animals sometimes die in zoos, just as they do in the wild.

"Here at Marineland we have the greatest respect for the beautiful animals in our care in both life and death."

The graves contain the corpses of whales, dolphins, sea lions, seals and walruses, as well as bears, bison, deer and other animals at the park, which opened in 1961 under its owner, John Holer.

Environment Ministry spokesperson Kate Jordan said the inspection is a "high priority" and a team was being assembled late Wednesday. The ministry found out about the alleged mass graves when Torstar News Service called to ask about the legality and environmental impact of massive burial sites.

The province requires waste permits to dispose of animal corpses. Jordan said there are protocols surrounding the proper way to bury animals, periodic inspections of the sites and soil and water testing for contamination.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Eight years later. Deering sisters win court case against Ontario cities

A high-profile court battle between Erica and Shannon Deering and the City of Oshawa ended with a win for the quadriplegic sisters, eight years after the car accident that left them with catastrophic spinal injuries.

In a ruling released on Thursday, the Supreme Court of Canada sided with a 2010 trial judge decision. That ruling found Oshawa and Scugog two-thirds liable for the crash because of a lack of road markings and a failure to post speed limit signage on Coates Road, a hilly rural road that divides Scugog and Oshawa.

The decision ends a years-long court saga — which has included appeals to both Ontario's and Canada's Supreme Courts — and establishes that municipalities have a duty to make country roads safe for drivers.

While the details of their compensation are confidential, the Port Perry sisters will be awarded enough money to be "cared for and have a good quality of life" for the rest of their lives, says their lawyer, Roger Oatley.

The initial damage claims by the Deerings totalled more than $30 million.

In August 2004, Shannon Deering was driving her sister and three friends to a movie when she saw oncoming headlights while driving on Coates Road. Believing the car was driving right at her, she veered into a ditch. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Genital mutilation

UN calls for ban on female circumcision

The UN General Assembly unanimously approved a resolution Thursday calling for a global ban on female genital mutilation, a centuries-old practice stemming from the belief that circumcising girls controls women's sexuality and enhances fertility.

It has also been linked to religious and cultural practices, although Muslim and Christian leaders have spoken out against it.

Although not legally binding, General Assembly resolutions reflect international concerns and carry moral and political weight.

The UN said in 2010 that about 70 million girls and women had undergone the procedure, and the World Health Organization said about 6,000 girls were circumcised every day.

The resolution calls on the UN's 193 member states to condemn the practice and launch education campaigns to eliminate it.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The 13 to watch in 2013

Portraits of society's rising stars were photographed at the corner of Yonge and Dundas streets in Toronto on Wednesday. In the front row: Lindsey Stewart, Dane Clark and Patrick Gunning. In the middle row: Amanda Lee Kew, Grant van Gameren, Cara Gee, Shadya Yasin, Jordan Subban and Dr. Samir Sinha. In the back row: Maria Franke, Dr. Danielle Martin, Yu-Ling Cheng and giant panda Er Shun. LUCAS OLENIUK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

No monkeying around on flights

Apes on a plane. Air Canada no longer transporting animals for research purposes

Quoted

"Queen's University also points out that animals may need to be transported several thousand kilometres by truck through the United States ... and Canada, which may cause unnecessary stress for the animals."

Excerpt from the decision

Air Canada is within its rights to refuse to transport primates that are being used for research, a Canadian regulator has ruled.

A Canadian Transportation Agency tribunal issued its decision on Thursday, dismissing the complaints of health-research groups arguing the airline should be required to carry the animals. It said Air Canada's restrictions are reasonable and aren't discriminatory because the carrier risks losing passengers who disagree with research using primates.

The original complaint against the airline's policy came from Steven Liss, vice-principal of research at Queen's University, and the Public Health Agency of Canada. They argued the policy unfairly discriminates against them.

But Air Canada said it has received 47,000 letters from the public, protesting its transport of primates being used for research, and some people threatened to stop travelling with the airline if it didn't refuse to carry the research animals.

The agency accepted in its decision that Air Canada had a legitimate concern of losing passengers that far outweighed the possible loss of income they earn from transporting the primates.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Scientists have sights set on new planets

Five new planets orbiting a sun very much like Earth's have been detected just 12 light years away, an international team of astrophysicists reports.

One of those planets sits in the "habitable zone" just far enough away from the star Tau Ceti to support water and thus life similar to Earth's.

Tau Ceti is a celestial neighbour in our Milky Way Galaxy, visible just by looking up at the night sky. Scientists have long studied it but never before found evidence that it had planets circling it.

Researchers from England, Finland, Chile, Australia and the United States took 6,000 observations from three telescopes, then constructed a new system of algorithms to figure out what the noise signals they picked up could mean.

"I am very confident that the signals are there," said lead author Mikko Tuomi of the University of Hertfordshire.

What scientists can't say with absolute certainty is that the signals are planets, even though they behave like planets in orbit and they can't see what else they could be.

"We initially believed that there are no planets," Tuomi said of the start of the study. They expected to use Tau Ceti as a target for their work with a new noise-modelling system.

The discovery, fellow study researcher Steven Vogt said, helps support astrophysics' rapidly coalescing point of view that most stars have their own planets and many of those planets are going to be like Earth. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Supreme Court split on freedom to testify in a veil

Balancing act. Ruling states each judge must weigh religious rights and right to a fair trial

A sharply divided Supreme Court of Canada was not able to definitively rule Thursday whether a woman can wear a religious veil known as a niqab while testifying in court.

In a rare 4-2-1 split decision, the Supreme Court ruled that a witness can cover their face in certain circumstances.

The case pitted two protections in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms against each other — religious freedom versus an accused person's right to a fair trial.

The practical effect of that decision was to pass the case back to an Ontario trial judge that had just begun a preliminary hearing.

The Supreme Court was not able to definitively rule on niqabs in court. MAYA ALLERUZZO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

In this case, a Muslim woman sought to wear a niqab while testifying against two men she claims sexually assaulted her as a child.

The two men claim the charter allows them to confront their accuser and observe her facial expressions as she testifies. Due to a publication ban, the woman can only be identified as N.S.

Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin wrote for the majority and affirmed the two charter rights should receive the fullest possible expression.

McLachlin spelled out a four-step analysis that the judge at N.S.'s preliminary hearing can now use to determine the issue. The ruling will also be a precedent in other cases.

"The judge must assess all these factors and determine whether ... the salutary effects of requiring the witness to remove the niqab outweigh the deleterious effects of doing so."

The ruling told trial judges to ask themselves three questions: Would requiring the witness to remove the niqab interfere with her religious freedom? Would permitting the witness to wear it create a serious risk to trial fairness? Is there a way to accommodate both rights? THE CANADIAN PRESS

Monkey mom melancholy

Media swarm Yasmin Nakhuda as she leaves a hearing about her monkey Darwin — the Ikea monkey — with his coat in her hands at the Superior Court of Justice in Oshawa, Ont. The custody case is expected to resume in mid-January. RENE JOHNSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

First Nations protest

Woman charged in hammer attack

A woman is facing a mischief charge after footage of her attacking a First Nations protester in London, Ont., was posted on YouTube.

The video shows a woman walking out of an apartment building, talking briefly with protesters then hitting a car with a hammer. ANGELA MULLINS/METRO IN LONDON, ONT.

Edutainment

Teacher in trouble over drag video

In the small community of Brentwood Bay on Vancouver Island, a video featuring bikini-clad drag queens has been deemed too racy for the classroom.

Brentwood Elementary School teacher Joe Winkler showed the clip to his Grade 4 students as an introduction to transgender issues.

After parent complaints, Winkler was suspended without pay pending an investigation in January. LUKE SIMCOE/METRO ONLINE

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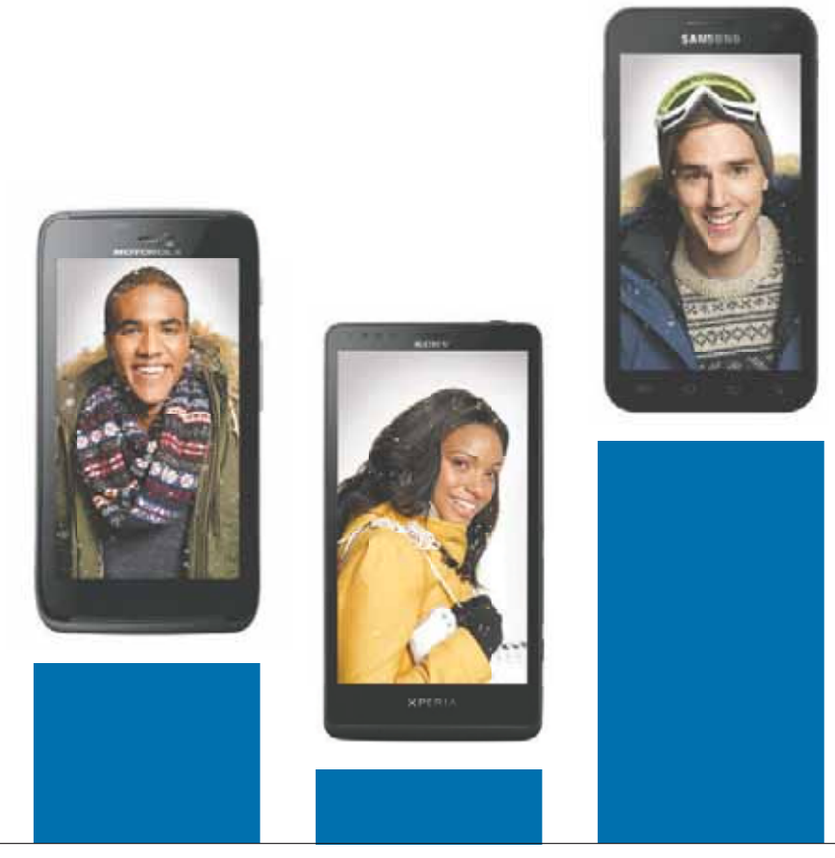

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Olympian working as an escort

Double life. After reports of prostitution, runner Suzy Favor Hamilton tweets that she's been working for an escort service for the past year

Olympian Suzy Favor Hamilton
JOHN BAZEMORE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Three-time Olympic runner Suzy Favor Hamilton has admitted to leading a double life as an escort.

She apologized Thursday after a report by The Smoking Gun website said she had been working as a prostitute in Las Vegas.

The 44-year-old Favor Hamilton lives in Madison, Wis. The Smoking Gun said she has been working for the past year for an escort service.

Soon after the story appeared online, Favor Hamilton released a series of tweets saying in part that she was "drawn to escorting in large part because it provided many coping mechanisms for me when I was going through a very challenging time with my marriage and my life."

A middle-distance runner, Favor Hamilton competed for the U.S. at the Olympics in 1992, 1996 and 2000 but did not win a medal. She won seven U.S. national titles.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Miss Universe crown heads back to U.S.

Miss USA, Olivia Culpo, left, is crowned Miss Universe during Wednesday's competition in Las Vegas. Twenty-year-old Culpo, an American university student, won the title, replacing outgoing champion Leila Lopes of Angola and beating out 88 competitors from six continents. JULIE JACOBSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Unlucky 2013?

Good luck charms installed in Times Square

Officials in New York City have gathered good luck charms to accompany the unlucky number 13 that will light up when the New Year's Eve ball drops in Times Square.

The New York Post reports that 13 good luck charms will be installed along with the sign atop One Times Square for the celebration that will ring in the new year.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Deadly cruise

Italian prosecutors finish Concordia shipwreck probe

Prosecutors in Tuscany have officially finished their probe of the Costa Concordia shipwreck that killed 32 people off the Italian coast. State TV quoted Chief Prosecutor Francesco Verusio as saying Capt. Francesco Schettino risks 20 years in prison if convicted of manslaughter and abandoning ship.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mining prospects empower remote Oji-Cree reserve

Chief Eli Moonias holds up an autographed Toronto Maple Leafs Wendel Clark jersey, from the Noront mining company, on the Oji-Cree reserve Tuesday in Marten Falls, Ont. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

For Christmas, Chief Eli Moonias received a Toronto Maple Leafs jersey autographed by Wendel Clark.

His remote northern Ontario community of Marten Falls got 50 turkeys and a visit from Santa, laden with children's gifts.

And in March, the 61-year-old chief will be granted his wish of travelling to China — if he can get his passport in time.

They're all gifts from mining companies who need the chief's support to develop what could be a world-class base-metal discovery.

Moonias's community sits next to what has become known as the Ring of Fire. Marten Falls is a small, fly-in reserve — just three streets of houses for about 300 people at the junction of the Albany and Ogoki rivers.

It's in the middle of one of the only forests in the world that has never been touched by industry, an area that hosts six of Canada's biggest rivers.

When trapping for furs lost its lustre several decades ago, nothing replaced it in Marten Falls.

Unless the residents are working for the band office or a government-run social service, they're almost certainly unemployed — and more often than not, addicted to prescription painkillers at the expense of putting food on the table for their families.

Never have they felt more empowered.

"If you don't reassure me, that's when I say no," said Moonias.

About 130 kilometres to the north of the reserve, multinational miner Cliffs Natural Resources wants to develop a huge chromite mine to make a key ingredient in stainless steel. The firm brought Marten Falls the Christmas turkeys.

Next door, Toronto-based Noront Resources wants to mine nickel and other base metals. Noront employees chipped together to bring the Leafs shirt, Santa and an entertainment troupe of breakdancers.

Co-operation from First Nations is essential for both companies and for anyone else wanting to do business in the remote James Bay lowlands.

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Four dead as snowstorm slams midwestern U.S.

Cameron Jones gets some help after getting stuck in a snowbank in Omaha, Neb., Thursday, after the first major snowstorm of the season. THE OMAHA WORLD-HERALD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Winter's here.

Slippery roads, cancelled flights and blankets of snow may put a damper on holiday travels

Four people died as the first major snowstorm of the season hit the U.S. Midwest early Thursday, threatening to disrupt some of the nation's busiest airports ahead of the holiday weekend.

Forecasters warned that heavy snow coupled with strong winds could create blizzard conditions from Kansas to Wisconsin after the storm blanketed the Rocky Mountains earlier in the week.

In Chicago, officials at O'Hare International Airport reported more than 90 cancellations.

In Iowa, state police said a 25-vehicle pileup killed at least one person.

In Wisconsin, sheriff's officials said slick conditions led to at least two deaths late Wednesday when a driver lost control of his car. In Utah, a woman who tried to walk for help after her car became stuck in snow died Tuesday night. Search and rescue crews on snowmobiles found her buried in the snow.

Southern toll

- **Mobile, Ala.** High winds peeled the roofs off buildings and toppled trucks but no one was injured.
- **Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama.** Tornado warnings remained in effect in parts of these areas.

The heavy, wet snow made some unplowed streets in Des Moines nearly impossible to navigate in anything other than a four-wheel drive vehicle. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Environment Canada. Prolonged warm weather was the big story of 2012

Canada coped with a slew of natural disasters from freak storms to floods this calendar year, but the country's meteorological watchdog says Canadians will remember 2012 as the year when the weather was too hot to handle.

Environment Canada says unusually high temperatures from coast to coast ranked as the top climate-related story of the year.

Senior climatologist David Phillips says Canadians experienced warmer than average conditions right through the year, making the stretch from January to November the fourth-warmest on record since 1948.

Phillips says the three-month stretch from July to September was the warmest in 65 years. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wild winds

19

Number of tropical storms that rolled through North America this year—double the amount of a typical season.

A house sinks in Two Mile, B.C., due to heavy rainfall. Experts say Canadians will remember the heat over natural disasters this year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Skiers lost

Father and sons rescued at resort

For the second time in less than a week, rescuers have been called out to help people who went out of bounds in a B.C. ski area.

In the latest case, a father and his three sons got lost Wednesday after leaving the marked ski area of the Revelstoke Mountain Resort. The RCMP says they were rescued Thursday morning. THE CANADIAN PRESS

South Africa

Toad stowed in candlestick

It's a real-life Mr. Toad's Wild Ride.

Animal-rescue officials in South Africa say they found a toad from China hidden inside a porcelain candlestick.

The Star newspaper reported that workers had to break the candlestick to get the toad out. It was still alive, but had to be put down as it is a possible invasive species. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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A woman types while surfing the Internet in North Vancouver on Wednesday. Our continued reliance on technology means we're no longer very good at undertaking manual, old-fashioned tasks. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Y kant Canaydians spel? Some blame it on the Internet

Disappearing skills. Digital life is ruining our ability to do basic tasks such as spell properly, recall phone numbers and write by hand

Canadians may be among the world's most prolific Internet users, but it seems all that time online hasn't made us a nation of careful spellers.

Many of us often type "facebok" into Google and rather than correcting the obvious mistake, let the search engine fix it. Monitoring Canadians' search habits would reveal that many, many more consistently type in "faceboo," "faebook" and "fcaebook" — but they know Google will get the point.

Others can't be bothered to tap out even eight characters and have learned that entering just "face" or "fb" will get them exactly the link they're seeking.

Is that lazy or efficient? Should we be thanking Google's engineers for saving us a few seconds or lament that technology is dooming us to intellectual laziness?

It seems hardly anyone can remember phone numbers anymore since we starting storing them in our mobile phones.

Outside of schools and some workplaces, the practice of putting pen to paper is becoming increasingly rare. To many, scribbling with a pen feels quaint in today's digital age.

Who needs maps and a sense of direction with GPS technology — which is now nearly ubiquitous on smartphones and tablets — to guide the way?

And now voice-recognition software is exploding in efficiency and popularity, raising the prospect that typing could eventually become another skill that's made redundant by convenient, task-relieving technology.

For Matthew Thomas, 33, it was the signing of a birthday card that made him consider just how infrequent old-fashioned manual tasks like handwriting have become in his typical routine.

"I realized how rarely I'm actually ever writing anything by hand and there was like a moment of panic where I felt a little scared because as I was writing I was having a hard time," Thomas said, noting that he felt the need to concentrate more and think about the act of writing compared to the automatic process of typing.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"When you're typing ... you don't have to think — (and autocorrect) thinks for you. So I was like, 'Wow, I'm really scary now when I don't have Google or spell-check to help me out.'"

Matthew Thomas, 33

Washington, D.C.

As House GOP yanks Plan B, fiscal cliff draws nearer

Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives, confronted with a revolt among the party's rank and file, abandoned a vote Thursday night on politically charged but symbolic legislation aimed at averting a fast-approaching "fiscal cliff," after failing to gather enough support for a measure meant to strengthen the party's position ahead of final negotiations with President Barack Obama.

The abrupt turn of events left precious little time for a divided government to prevent across-the-board tax increases and deep spending cuts from taking effect with the new year. Economists say the combination threatens a return to recession for an economy that has been recovering slowly from the last one.

House Speaker John Boehner's so-called Plan B legislation was drafted unilaterally by Republicans who control the House and faced sure defeat in the Democrat-held Senate.

It was crafted to protect almost all Americans from the expiration of Bush-era tax cuts on Jan. 1, 2013, but would have let rates increase for people earning more than $1 million US annually. That violated long-standing Republican anti-tax orthodoxy and triggered the opposition of fiscal conservatives.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Dairy farmers say eggnog sales help compensate for decreased milk consumption over the holidays. FLICKR/REESECLLOYD

Drink up! Dairy producers depend on eggnog rush

Holiday season. Sales of festive drink offset temporary decline in milk consumption

As you raise a glass of eggnog over the holidays, consider that you're making the season brighter for the country's farmers. There's typically a decline in milk consumption over the holiday period as people turn to boozy beverages, and some dairy producers say eggnog sales are key in offsetting that slump.

Andrew Taylor, plant manager at Hewitt's Dairy in Hagersville, Ont. said the operation sees an increase of 10 to 15 per cent in sales — usually lasting from the beginning of December until early January — and that eggnog is the beverage behind the jump.

"Overall milk sales tend to fall in December as people tend to drink other things, usually an alcoholic beverage, so anything that compensates for that is something that we look forward to," said Taylor. MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO IN SASKATOON

Quoted

"We rely on (eggnog). Farmers need a consistent market and it helps to maintain that consistency."

Andrew Taylor, plant manager, Hewitt's Dairy in Hagersville, Ont.

Downloading option

Keep those tweets! Twitter introduces personal archive

Twitter is offering its users a chance to keep a digital scrapbook of all their tweets. The tool, announced this week, is designed to make it easier for people to review all their activity on Twitter's messaging service.

When it's available, the downloading option will appear at the bottom of each user's settings menu.

Twitter, which is based in San Francisco, said it may take a few weeks before everyone gets the feature.

After a records request is made, users will receive an email on how to download their personal archive. For Twitter's earliest users, the records date back to 2006 when Twitter started.

Twitter users already have been able to peruse their past tweets by navigating to their personal profile page. But going that route is more cumbersome because it requires scrolling down a page that can sometimes be slow to display additional tweets. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wireless industry. Data use fuels revenue growth

Here's my cell number. Call me, maybe? Or maybe not. Cellphone users are doing less calling as they buy more smartphones and use the device for texting, emailing, web surfing, mobile apps, social networking and watching videos.

And it's that surge in data use that Canada's telecom companies — big and small — are banking on as the revenue driver of the future.

"It's no longer just your teenage kids. It's everybody," telecom analyst Brahm Eiley said. "They use their phone the way they would use their PC," he added.

Dan Maitland has an iPhone and hardly uses it for calls. "These are not just phones," said Maitland, 39, who makes software that helps train pilots to be safer at flight simulator company CAE Inc. in Montreal.

"They are small computers that have the ability to make a phone call."

Maitland said he uses his iPhone for such things as web searches, apps, accessing files for work and reading.

And Maitland is doing exactly what wireless providers expect and want him to do to help increase their data revenues in the years ahead.

Faster wireless networks are also helping drive the increasing use of data by consumers, Eiley added. THE CANADIAN PRESS

By the numbers

55%

The Convergence Consulting Group expects that about 55 per cent of all cellphone users in Canada will have smartphones by the end of this year. That's expected to increase to 65 per cent by the end of 2013 and go up to 80 per cent by year-end 2016.

Market Minute

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MAPLE SYRUP HEIST, RAPTORS BACK ON THE BALL AND A TOP-10 HIT

THE LIST
Mike Benhaim
metronews.ca

1 **Say what?** South African President Jacob Zuma maintains leadership of the currently ruling African National Congress party by defeating deputy president Kgalema Motlanthe with a dubious 75 per cent majority vote. Perhaps it's just that the robocalls had trouble pronouncing the name Kgalema Motlanthe.

2 **Slap-happy.** Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh have created a sophisticated prosthetic arm that can translate brain signals into the appropriate movements. While a definite boon for the physically challenged, I raise two concerns: You just know some rich guy is eventually going to buy a couple of extra arms for no good reason, and someone having a bad dream will end up slapping the heck out of their bed-partner.

3 **Holy crepes.** After a huge manhunt, Quebec police have arrested more than a dozen accused assailants in what will one day be known as the Great Maple Syrup Heist of 2012. Officers also recovered important paraphernalia used in the production of maple syrup, and around $18 million worth of our nation's most delicious natural resource (I believe that's street value). The province has been dealing with controversies over corruption and organized crime, but they'll be damned if they are going to sit by and let citizens endure Christmas with dry, unsavoury pancakes.

4 **Bac off.** Dollarama has pulled two brands of cleansing wipes from its shelves after tests by CBC News revealed unacceptable levels of bacteria. It's reassuring to know that all of the other products we use to rid our skin of impurities contain "acceptable" levels of bacteria.

5 **Kill me, maybe?** The votes are in, and Carly Rae Jepsen's Call Me Maybe is the song of the year. While I am pleased for our homegirl, after the millionth listen I respectfully request, for the love of God, that someone call this girl already!

6 **Fields of dreams.** The Toronto Raptors welcomed back Landry Fields, who was cleared by team doctors after undergoing elbow surgery over a month ago. The team is on a four-game winning streak, and Fields is anxious to jump in and get them back to their comfort zone.

7 **Winter wonders.** Monkeys shopping, eagles snatching babies, cows falling from trucks — it brings to mind fond memories of something my mother used to say: "If your flying baby cries over a truckload of spilled cows, no one's ever going to buy your sharp-dressed monkey." In fairness, English was not her first language.

8 **And the winner is ...** Cassadee Pope. Pope is now officially The Voice. Fans voted for The Personality as well, but to me she'll always be The Legs. Congrats, Cassadee.

9 **My favourite things.** This week in 1985, Born in the U.S.A. by Bruce Springsteen surpassed Michael Jackson's Thriller as the second-longest-lasting album on Billboard's American Top 10. It stayed there for 79 weeks. So what mega-singing sensation is powerful enough to top these two superstars for the honour of being No. 1? At 109 consecutive weeks ... Julie Andrews with The Sound of Music. Of course it was.

Follow The Metro List on Twitter @TheMetroList

The Sound of Music has fought off the likes of Born in the U.S.A. and Thriller in retaining the record for most consecutive weeks on Billboard's Top 10. CONTRIBUTED

May your days be merry and bright

MATT YORK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Christmas circuit

Don't get blinded by the lights

A woman walks along Natal Circle viewing Christmas lights in Gilbert, Ariz., in this photo taken earlier this month.

As Christmas decorations light up across the globe, take these precautions to avoid a holiday mishap.

• **Sparkle without the spark.** Turn off the electricity to the supply outlet before working with outdoor wiring. Unplug light strings before replacing bulbs and check to ensure replacement bulbs match the voltage and wattage of the original. To avoid a shock from damaged wire, use insulated fasteners rather than metal nails or tacks to hold light strings in place.

• **Stay dry.** Keep electrical connectors for outdoor lights above ground, out of water, and away from metal eavestroughs. Connect outdoor lighting into receptacles protected by weatherproof ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCI). These can provide protection from electric shock by sensing ground leakage and cutting electrical power.

• **Put your faith in the magic of the holidays but don't fall for fakes.** Avoid counterfeit electronic decorations that haven't been certified for safe use. Look for the mark from an accredited certification organization like CSA Group.

NEWS CANADA

Pales in comparison

Neighbour cops out on lights

An Arizona woman who knew she couldn't compete head-on with her neighbour's elaborate Christmas-light display is attracting attention for her response.

Using red and green lights, Kristina Green of Maricopa, Ariz., spelled out the word "ditto" and made an arrow pointing toward her neighbour's home.

KNXV-TV reports that Green's display is made of around 600 lights. Her neighbour's setup has about 16,000 colourful lights. Green has created a Facebook page for her "ditto" sign.

The Christmas light competition heats up for some neighbourhoods, while other neighbours go with a "ditto" sign and an arrow. SCREEN GRAB

Last year, a family in Beaverton, Ore., also erected the word "ditto" with an arrow on the side of their own home toward a neighbour's house as part of an online movement.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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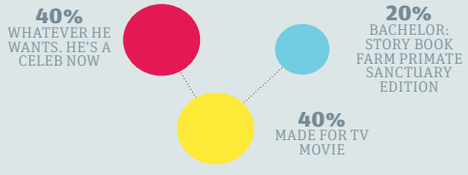

Twitter

@GraemeMcRanor: I feel like today's Metro headline is a little over the top.

@andrewharris33: Last minute Xmas shopping...

@charliedemers: Dear Vancouver: if you wouldn't drive in it, don't let others sleep in it. Quit being a Scrooge about shelters. Happy Non-Nimby Holidays!

@JOHNNYBRAVO_CDN: Hey fraudsters, before you make your fraudulent claim, you can be sure @icbc will be checking to see if your plate was scanned on #portmann

@tommychong: Vancouver was snowed in so I smoked out!..tc

@TristinHopper: After #PortMann ice struck my car, I drew Kate Winslet naked and got shot at by Billy Zane.

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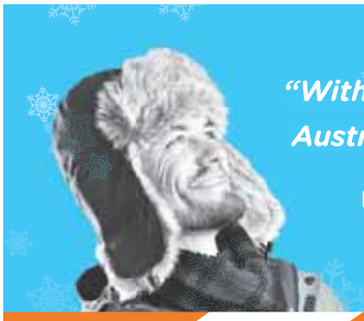

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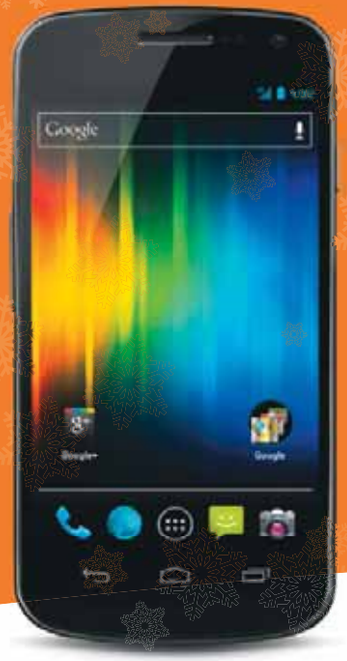

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This is 40 sees Paul Rudd and Leslie Mann reprise their roles as the warring couple in Knocked Up. HANDOUT

Reel Guys

RICHARD CROUSE AND MARK BRESLIN

This is all too familiar

Biting honesty.

Judd Apatow's latest comedy pleases with its realistic take on life in middle age

Richard: Mark, after writing that synopsis, I feel it necessary to remind everyone that this is a comedy, so mixed into this study of midlife disappointment are some keenly honed and very funny observations. It's a blend of heart and humour, frequently in the same scene, and often in the same sentence. When Pete says to Debbie, "We're like Simon and Garfunkel and you turned me into Garfunkel," it's a funny line, delivered well, but also a loaded one that places his unhappiness front and centre. It's that kind of writing and performance that makes you laugh and cringe at the same time. What did you think?

Mark: It's Apatow's best movie, but not necessarily his funniest. The comedy comes intermittently in between stretches of a married couple bickering, experiencing a financial meltdown, problems with their kids and their parents. Just like real life. But I'm not sure the very funny comedy bits redeem the rest of the movie's grim and lacerating honesty.

RC: I think Apatow is trying to get that James Brooks magical mix of funny and raw emotion. The ratio might be a bit off here, but his cast — Rudd and Mann — both bring considerable likeability and comic chops, but temper that with resentment and dissatisfaction. Mann is particularly good. A scene with a hockey player who doesn't realize she is married is funny but framed with a kind of vulnerability that elevates Debbie from stock character to believable person.

MB: I found this movie less sentimental than most of Brooks' work, but the cast does make the bitter pill seem a bit sweeter. Not just Rudd and Mann, but the smaller parts — Albert Brooks and John Lithgow as their respective fathers, Jason Segel as the insufferable personal trainer and Apatow's own daughters as the couple's siblings, all work wonders. And two comic set pieces late in the movie — when most directors would be sprinting to the finish line — one with Charlene Yi, the other with Melissa McCarthy — are comedy gold. Your favourite funny bit?

RC: I loved everything to do with the Graham Parker storyline. As the retro rock act Rudd's character is trying to promote, Parker — who was one of my 1970s real-life punk rock heroes — gamely allows himself to be the butt of a lot of jokes, including my favourite from Chris O'Dowd, who says, "It's hard to watch a band when you know all of them were alive on D Day."

MB: Casting Parker was such an inspired choice! I hope that life will imitate art and people will get interested in his music again. But the movie is full of such inspired offbeat picks. That was Tatum O'Neal as the realtor and radio talkshow hero Phil Hendrie who attacks Rudd after the bicycle crash.

Synopsis

This is 40 takes place in the week between Pete and Debbie's (Paul Rudd and Leslie Mann reprising their roles from Knocked Up) 40th birthdays. Although Debbie lies about how old she is, larger problems include constantly warring kids (Maude and Iris Apatow), an empty bank account made worse by a freeloading father (Albert Brooks), an embezzling employee and relationship doubts triggered by Debbie's loaded question, "If I hadn't gotten pregnant 14 years ago, would we still be together?"

- Richard: ●●●●○
- Mark: ●●●●○

From writer/director JUDD APATOW

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Action

Django Unchained

Director. Quentin Tarantino

Stars. Jamie Foxx, Christoph Waltz

Whatever you think of Quentin Tarantino, his movies stand out in an industry full of mediocrity. Django Unchained, the filmmaker's homage to the spaghetti western, is certainly no different — casting Jamie Foxx as the titular slave-turned-bounty hunter. Aided by a smooth-talking "dentist" (Waltz), Django strives to save his wife from a plantation owner played by Leonardo Dicaprio. Hypnotic dialogue and Tarantino's sense of retro-style keep Django smartly entertaining, albeit a bit long at 165 minutes. **STEVE GOW**

Action

Jack Reacher

Director. Christopher McQuarrie

Stars. Tom Cruise, Rosamund Pike

Tom Cruise channels the macho swagger of John Wayne and Robert Mitchum in this refreshingly unpretentious, highly entertaining mystery thriller. Cruise plays an ex-military cop who is called in to aid defense lawyer Rosamund Pike in profiling another soldier who has murdered five civilians. Of course there's more to the serpentine case than meets the eye. Jack Reacher gets an extra star for casting cult German director Werner Herzog as a reptilian psychopath.
CHRIS ALEXANDER

Drama

Cirque du Soleil: Worlds Away

Director. Andrew Adamson

Stars. Erica Linz, Igor Zaripov

The problem with making a Cirque du Soleil movie is that the company's acrobatic shows are more spectacle than the medium of cinema truly allows. And these days, that's saying something. Worlds Away (which is a virtual "greatest hits" from seven Cirque shows) tries to thread a narrative throughout, but even that's lost amongst the thrilling stunts that are still more impressive on stage than in a 3D film.
STEVE GOW

Musical

Les Misérables

Director. Tom Hooper

Stars. Hugh Jackman, Russell Crowe, Anne Hathaway

Chances are, if you're excited to see Les Misérables, you already know what you're in for. Based on the hugely popular stage play, this brooding musical (there are no dance numbers here, folks) stars Jackman as a reformed thief who adopts the daughter of a prostitute in the years following the French Revolution. There's no denying the grandiosity of staging and the device using actors' live vocals leads to impressive performances, but the windy one-takes are just as wearisome.
STEVE GOW

Drama

A Late Quartet

Director. Yaron Zilberman

Stars. Philip Seymour Hoffman, Mark Ivanir, Catherine Keener and Christopher Walken

Framed by Beethoven's Opus 131 String Quartet in C-sharp minor, the film focuses on members of a world-renowned string quartet struggling with change as they enter their 25th season. Walken, the group's cellist and leader, is diagnosed with career-ending Parkinson's, and sets off a chain reaction of sexual, artistic and professional tensions pent up for 25 years. It's an odd but well-balanced tale of elite artistry and domestic melodrama.
ANNE BRODIE

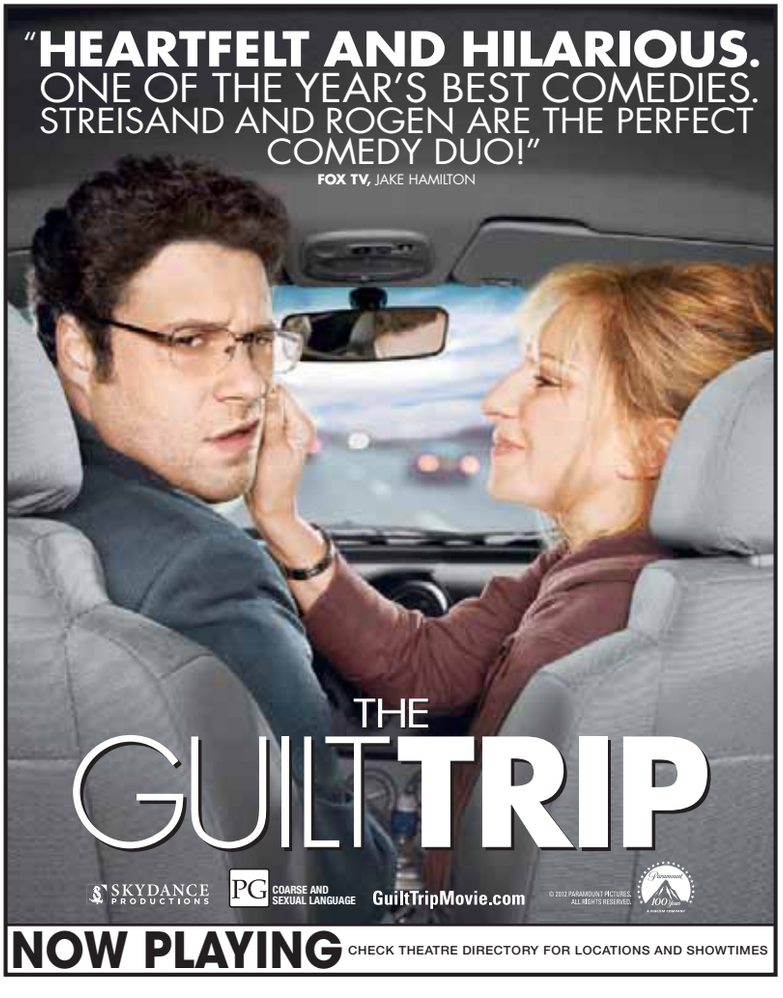
Drama

Rust and Bone

Director. Jacques Audiard

Stars. Marion Cotillard, Matthias Schoenaerts and Armand Verdure

Vagrant Ali is given custody of his son when his wife is found to have used the five-year-old as a drug mule. Ali's irresponsible, angry and impoverished, working the criminal fringes as an itinerant security guard and wrestler, hardly the ideal parent. But he meets Stéphanie, who lost both legs in an aquarium whale attack, and discovers his selflessness, long buried. Ali and Stéphanie's stories are the dramatic bones of the film, but its heart is the shadowy figure of the little boy.
ANNE BRODIE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The bad. Films that brought us to tears in 2012

Tom Cruise in a campy rock musical. Can it get any worse? HANDOUT

There are a lot of ways to qualify a bad film, which led to some entries not making this list. Some films disappoint by wasting talent and prestige, like the Hobbit, while others come from such uninspired origins that it seems pointless to complain about them. Then there are these 10, which are just plain bad.

Prometheus
This one might not be as objectively bad as others on the list, but it failed on a much grander scale, taking a beloved science fiction franchise, a talented cast and gorgeous cinematography and creating maddeningly thoughtless dreck. Worst of all, a film that was meant to be a prequel ends instead with a presumptuous setup for a sequel. A note to director Ridley Scott: That's not up to you.

One for the Money
This turkey kicked off the year in January and nearly held the title for year's worst the whole way through. Katherine Heigl's attempt to launch herself a franchise based on Janet Evanovich's books is clumsy, painful and plodding, inspiring contempt from its viewers.

Rock of Ages
The poppy hair metal of the 1980s — already not the most soulful music in the world — has any life drained out of it completely in this painfully campy, overlong and uneven trudge down the Sunset Strip. Alec Baldwin and Catherine Zeta-Jones just look embarrassed to be there, and Tom Cruise should be, considering his performance. This movie — storyline and all — was better last year when it was called Burlesque.

Savages
Oliver Stone's over-saturated, bombastic drug war fantasy is filled with overwrought melodrama, empty tough-guy posturing and an ending that is beyond frustrating. But the worst aspect of the film can be summed up in three words: Blake Lively narration.

What to Expect When You're Expecting
Basing an ensemble comedy on a pregnancy manual was probably the first mistake. The second was thinking any of the shrill and unsympathetic characters on display are at all entertaining. NED EHRBAR, MWN

Rounding out the 10 worst

- American Reunion
- The Raven
- Alex Cross
- Red Dawn
- The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn — Part 2

Metro's 10 must-see films from the past year

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

This may finally be the year that well-made big-budget studio fare finally gets some respect, a cause championed by the likes of Christopher Nolan. Which is awkward, because we were expecting more from his Dark Knight Rises, but he didn't quite stick the landing. If nothing else, 2012 proved to be a delightfully diverse year at the movies. Some runners up for this list include best picture front-runner Argo, Michael Haneke's Cannes favourite Amour and Quentin Tarantino's Django Unchained.

Cloud Atlas
A big, bold, far-reaching tale encompassing six different stories — and six very different visual and genre styles — to explore the enduring power of love and mankind's struggle for freedom. The Wachowskis and co-director Tom Tykwer packed a lot into their 172 minutes, adapting David Mitchell's gorgeous novel into something vital and engrossing.

Zero Dark Thirty
Director Kathryn Bigelow and screenwriter Mark Boal follow up their wins for the Hurt Locker with an even better film tracking the decade-long manhunt for Osama Bin Laden, buoyed by a performance by Jessica Chastain that should earn her a best actress Oscar. The film's greatest feat is presenting all of the facts without an ounce of politicization.

The Impossible
This true-life tale of a European family separated during the 2004 tsunami is incredibly manipulative, but it is some of the most artful, effective manipulation ever committed to film, and for that it deserves respect. It's a harrowing, unflinching look at the struggle for survival that puts viewers through the emotional wringer.

Beasts of the Southern Wild
A startling debut with a six-year-old unknown star (Quvenzhané Wallis) and a look and feel unlike anything seen before, this charming and moving fable is a rare treasure, a visual poem with an equally enduring score co-written by director and co-writer Benh Zeitlin.

Cabin in the Woods
Joss Whedon had one of the year's biggest hits with the Avengers — which nearly made this list as well — but his real triumph this year comes in co-writing this sharp and hilarious deconstruction of the horror movie genre. Once the movie's real game is revealed, the film's giddy energy is infectious.

Rust and Bone
Oscar-winner Marion Cotillard turns in another striking and poignant performance as a whale trainer who loses her legs during an accident at work and rediscovers the beauty of life with the help of a down-on-his-luck bruiser of a single father (Matthais Schoenaerts).

Lincoln
Daniel Day-Lewis is of course the main attraction here, seamlessly transforming himself into the 16th president, but he shares the screen with a dizzying array of fantastic supporting performances, the best of which was Tommy Lee Jones, Lee Pace and James Spader.

Keep the Lights On
Writer-director Ira Sachs mines his own romantic past with aching honesty to tell the story of two men trying to love each other and ignore each other's addictions for nearly a decade.

Beasts of the Southern Wild. HANDOUT

Jessica Chastain's performance in Zero Dark Thirty is Oscar worthy. HANDOUT

It's an unflinching portrayal of intimacy.

Anna Karenina
Director Joe Wright and actress Keira Knightley team up for their third literary adaptation — after Pride and Prejudice and Atonement — with this gorgeous and risky translation of the Russian classic. The staging and style are mesmerizing, and Knightley shines, but the real standout here is Jude Law in a career-redefining turn as the cuckolded Alexei Karenin.

Skyfall
Sam Mendes leads the James Bond franchise to a new benchmark in quality just in time for its 50th anniversary, imbuing Daniel Craig's 007 with just the right amount of fun and '60s swagger. A delicious turn by Javiar Bardem as the villain and Roger Deakins' gorgeous cinematography help elevate it to something even more.

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The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) Fri 3-7-10:30 Sat-Sun 11:30-3-7-10:30 Mon-Tue 3-7 Wed-Thu 11:30-3-7-10:30

Fifth Avenue Cinemas 2110 Burrard Street, 604-734-7469

Anna Karenina (PG) Wed-Thu 12:45
Django Unchained (14A) Tue-Thu 3:30-7:10-10:30
Hitchcock (PG) Fri-Mon 2:05 Wed-Thu 2:30
A Late Quartet (14A) Fri-Sun 12:25-4:35-6:55-9:15 Mon 12:25-4:35-6:55 Tue 4:35-6:55-9:15 Wed-Thu 12:25-4:35-6:55-9:15
Life of Pi 3D (G) Fri-Sun 1:15-4-6:45-9:25 Mon 1:15-4-6:45 Tue 4-6:45-9:25 Wed-Thu 1:15-4-6:45-9:25
Lincoln (PG) Fri-Sun 12:15-3:15-6:35-9:35 Mon 12:15-3:15-6:35 Tue 3:15-6:35-9:35 Wed-Thu 12:15-3:15-6:35-9:35
Silver Linings Playbook (14A) Fri-Sun 1:30-4:25-7:05-9:40 Mon 1:30-4:25-7:05 Tue 4:25-7:05-9:40 Wed-Thu 1:30-4:25-7:05-9:40
Skyfall (PG) Fri-Sun 4:10-7:10-10 Mon 4:10-7:10

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The Cat Returns (STC) Wed 6:30 Thu 4:30
Chris Marker Mixtape: Four Short Works (STC) Thu 8
Le Grand Amour (STC) Fri 8:25 Sun 4
Howl's Moving Castle (G) Sat 4 Sun 6:30 Wed 8
No Films Showing Today (STC) Mon-Tue
Pom Poko (STC) Thu 6:15
Porco Rosso (STC) Thu 8:30
Spirited Away (PG) Sat 6:30 Sun 8:45 Wed 2
Whisper of the Heart (STC) Sat 8:50 Wed 4:20 Thu 2:15
Yoyo (STC) Fri 6:30

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Anna Karenina (PG) Fri 4-7-9:30 Sat-Sun 1:15-4-7-9:30 Mon 4-7
Les Misérables (PG) Tue 3:45-7-10:15 Wed-Thu 12:30-3:45-7-10:15

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The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) Fri-Thu 11:30-3:15-7-10:45 Fri 12-2:45-3:45-6:30-7:30-10:15-11:15 Sat 11-12-2:45-3:45-6:30-7:30-10:15-11:15 Sun 12-2:45-3:45-6:30-7:30-10:15-11:15 Mon 12-2:45-3:45-6:30-7:30-10:15 Tue 2:45-6:30-10:15 Wed-Thu 11-2:45-6:30-10:15
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Skyfall (PG) Fri-Mon 12:25-3:40-7:10-10:30
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (14A) Fri 2:20-5:10-8-11 Sat 5:10-8-11 Sun 2:20-5:10-8-11 Mon 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:20

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56 Up (STC) Sat 7:45
The Fruit Hunters (STC) Wed 4
In Search of Haydn (STC) Wed 7:45
No Films Showing Today (STC) Mon-Tue
Step Up to the Plate (STC) Sat 6 Wed 6
Tess (STC) Fri 7 Sun 8

Vancouver Aquarium 4D Experience Theatre 845 Avison Way, 604-659-3752 vanaqua.org

The Polar Express 4-D Experience (STC) Fri 11:15-11:45-12:15-12:45-1:15-1:45-2:15-2:45-3:15-3:45-4:15 Sat-Sun 10:45-11:15-11:45-12:15-12:45-1:15-1:45-2:15-2:45-3:15-3:45-4:15 Mon-Thu 11:15-11:45-12:15-12:45-1:15-1:45-2:15-2:45-3:15-3:45-4:15

North Shore

Esplanade 6 200 West Esplanade, 604-983-2762

Cirque du Soleil: Worlds Away 3D (G) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Tue 4:15-7:10-9:40 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Wed-Thu 12:15-4:15-7:10-9:40
Django Unchained (14A) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Tue 4:30-8:30 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Wed-Thu 11:45-4:30-8:30
The Guilt Trip (PG) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Fri 6:45-9:45 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Sat-Sun 12:15-3:15-6:45-9:45 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Mon 12:15-3:15-6:45 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Tue 3:45-6:40-9:20 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Wed-Thu 12:30-3:45-6:40-9:20
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Fri 8:30-9:15 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Sat-Sun 12:30-1-4:30-5-8:30-9:15 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Mon 12:30-1-4:30-5 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital Tue 5-9 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital Wed-Thu 1-5-9
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Fri 7-8 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Sat-Sun 12-3-4-7-8 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Mon 12-3-4 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital Tue 4-8 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital Wed-Thu 12-4-8
Monsters, Inc. 3D (G) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Fri 6:30-9:20 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Sat-Sun 12:45-3:30-6:30-9:20 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Mon 12:45-3:30-6:30 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Tue 3:30-7-9:30 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Wed-Thu 12:45-3:30-7-9:30

Park & Tilford 333 Brooksbank Ave., 604-985-3911

Argo (PG) Fri 6:50-9:50 Sat-Sun 1:10-4:10-6:50-9:50 Mon 1:10-4:10-6:50
Jack Reacher (PG) Fri 7:20-10:30 Sat-Sun 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:30 Mon 1:20-4:20-7:20 Tue 4:20-7:20-10:30 Wed-Thu 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:30
Life of Pi 3D (G) Fri 7:05-10 Sat-Sun 1-4-7:05-10 Mon 1-4-7:05 Tue 4-6:50-9:45 Wed-Thu 12-4-6:50-9:45
Les Misérables (PG) Tue 3:10-6:40-10:05 Wed-Thu 11:40-3:10-6:40-10:05
Parental Guidance (G) Tue 5:10-7:35-10:10 Wed-Thu 11:30-2:10-5:10-7:35-10:10
Rise of the Guardians (G) Sat-Mon 12-2:20
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri 7:15-9:40 Sat-Sun 4:45-7:15-9:40 Mon 4:45-7:15
Skyfall (PG) Fri 7-10:10 Sat-Sun 12:30-3:40-7-10:10 Mon 12:30-3:40-7 Tue 3:40-7-10:10 Wed-Thu 12:30-3:40-7-10:10
This Is 40 (14A) Fri 7:10-10:20 Sat-Sun 1-4:05-7:10-10:20 Mon 1-4:05-7:10 Tue 4:05-7:10-10:20 Wed-Thu 1-4:05-7:10-10:20

Richmond

SilverCity Riverport 14211 Entertainment Way, 604-272-7280

Back to 1942 (14A) Fri 12:40-4-7:20-10:40 Sat 4-7:20-10:40 Sun-Mon 12:40-4-7:20-10:40
Cirque du Soleil: Worlds Away 3D (G) Fri-Mon 1-7 Tue-Thu 11:40-2:15-4:55-7:30-10:05
Dabangg 2 (PG) Fri-Mon 1:10-4:10-7:10-10:10 Tue-Thu 1:35-4:35-7:35-10:35
Django Unchained (14A) Tue-Thu 1:30-5:15-9 Tue-Thu 11:20-3:05-6:50-10:35
Elf (G) Sat 11
The Guilt Trip (PG) Fri 12:30-3-5:30-8-10:30 Sat 11:20-12:30-3-5:30-8-10:30 Sun-Thu 12:30-3-5:30-8-10:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) Fri-Mon 1:15-2-5-5:50-8:30-9:30 Tue-Thu 11-1:15-2:45-5-6:30-8:45-10:15
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey — An IMAX 3D Experience (14A) Fri-Thu 11:20-3-6:45-10:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) Fri-Mon 11:30-3:15-7-10:45 Tue-Thu 11:30-3:15-7-11 Fri-Sat 12-3:45-7:30-11:15 Sun-Mon 12-3:45-7:30
Jack Reacher (PG) Fri-Mon 1:50-4:50-7:50-11 Tue-Thu 10:55-1:50-4:50-7:50-11
Life of Pi 3D (G) Fri-Mon 1:05-4:10-7:10-10:35 Tue-Thu 1:25-4:30-7:40-10:45
Lincoln (PG) Fri-Mon 12-3:35-7-10:25 Tue-Thu 12:35-7
Les Misérables (PG) Tue-Thu 11:10-1:20-2:55-4:55-6:40-8:30-10:25
Monsters, Inc. 3D (G) Fri-Mon 11:50-2:20-4:50-7:20-9:50 Tue-Thu 11:40-2:10-4:45-7:20-9:50 Tue-Thu 11
Parental Guidance (G) Tue-Thu 11-12-2:40-5:20-8:05-10:40
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri-Mon 12:05 Tue-Thu 11:05
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri-Mon 2:35-5:05-7:45-10:15 Tue-Thu 11:50-2:20-4:50
Royal Opera House: The Nutcracker (STC) Sat 12:55
Silver Linings Playbook (14A) Fri-Mon 1-4:05-7:05-10:10 Tue-Thu 4-10:20
Skyfall (PG) Fri 12:25-3:50-7:15-10:45 Sat 1:20-4:20-7:35-10:50 Sun-Mon 12:25-3:50-7:15-10:45 Tue-Thu 12:20-3:40-7:20-10:40
This Is 40 (14A) Fri-Thu 1:30-4:35-7:40-10:50
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (14A) Fri 11:30-2:20-5:10-8-10:50 Sat 11:10-11:30-2:20-5:10-8-10:50 Sun-Mon 11:30-2:20-5:10-8-10:50 Tue-Thu 7:25-10:15
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Fri 11:50-2:30-5:05-7:45-10:35 Sat 11-11:50-2:30-5:05-7:45-10:35 Sun-Mon 11:50-2:30-5:05-7:45-10:35 Tue-Thu 10:55
Wreck-It Ralph 3D (G) Fri-Mon 3:45-9:45

Burnaby

Dolphin Cinemas 4555 E. Hastings St., 604-293-0332

Flight (14A) Fri-Sun 8:50
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) Fri 3:15-6:30-9:45 Sat-Thu 12-3:15-6:30-9:45
Les Misérables (PG) Tue-Thu 12:30-3:45-6:50-9:55
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri 4:45-6:50 Sat-Mon 12:45-2:45-4:45-6:50

SilverCity Metropolis 4700 Kingsway Ave., 604-435-7474

Django Unchained (14A) Tue 11:45-3:10-6:50-10:35 Wed-Thu 11:20-3-6:45-10:25
Elf (G) Sat 11
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) Fri-Mon 1:15-2-5-5:45-8:45-9:30 Tue 2:45-6:30-10:15 Wed-Thu 11:05-2:45-6:30-10:15
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) Fri-Tue 11:30-3:15-7-10:45 Wed-Thu 11:35-3:15-7-10:45 Fri 2:45-6:30-10:15 Sat 11:05-2:45-6:30-10:15 Sun-Mon 2:45-6:30-10:15
Jack Reacher (PG) Fri 1:50-4:50-7:50-11 Sat 11-1:50-4:50-7:50-11 Sun-Mon 1:50-4:50-7:50-11 Tue 1-4:10-7:15-10:25 Wed-Thu 11-1:50-4:50-7:50-11
Life of Pi 3D (G) Fri-Tue 1:25-4:30-7:35-10:40 Wed-Thu 1:35-4:30-7:35-10:40
Les Misérables (PG) Tue-Thu 11:40-3:10-6:40-10:10
Monsters, Inc. 3D (G) Fri-Thu 11:50-2:20-4:50-7:20-9:50 Sat 11:10 Wed-Thu 11:10
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri 12 Sat 11:10-12 Sun-Thu 12
Rise of the Guardians 3D (G) Fri-Mon 2:30-5:05-7:30-10 Tue-Thu 2:30-5:05-7:30
Skyfall (PG) Fri-Thu 12:30-3:50-7:10-10:30
This Is 40 (14A) Fri-Mon 1:30-4:35-7:40-10:50 Tue 12:55-4-7:05-10:20 Wed-Thu 1:30-4:35-7:40-10:50
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Fri 11:30 Sat 11:20 Sun-Mon 11:30 Tue 12:05 Wed-Thu 11

New West/ Coquitlam

SilverCity Coquitlam 170 Schoolhouse Street, 604-523-2911

Cirque du Soleil: Worlds Away 3D (G) Fri-Mon 1-7 Tue-Thu 11:55-2:30-5:40-8:15-10:55
Django Unchained (14A) Tue-Thu 11:20-3:05-6:50-10:35 Tue-Thu 1:30-5:15-9
Elf (G) Sat 11
The Guilt Trip (PG) Fri-Thu 12:30-3-5:30-8-10:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) Fri-Mon 1:45-2:45-5:30-6:30-9:15-10:15 Tue 2:45-6:30-10:15 Wed-Thu 11-2:45-6:30-10:15 Fri-Mon 1:15-5-8:45 Tue-Thu 12:30-4:30-8:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) Fri-Thu 11:30-3:15-7-10:45 Fri-Mon 12:30-4:15-8 Tue-Thu 1:15-5-8:45 Fri-Mon 2:10-6-9:50 Tue-Thu 2-6-10
Jack Reacher (PG) Fri-Tue 1:50-4:50-7:50-11 Wed-Thu 10:55-1:50-4:50-7:50-11
Life of Pi 3D (G) Fri-Thu 1:35-4:35-7:45-10:50 Fri-Mon 12:35-4-7-10:20
Lincoln (PG) Fri-Mon 12-3:25-6:50-10:20 Tue-Thu 3:40-10:10
Les Misérables (PG) Tue 11:15-2:55-6:40-10:25 Wed-Thu 11:10-2:55-6:40-10:25 Tue-Thu 11:30-3:10-6:50-10:30
Monsters, Inc. 3D (G) Fri-Thu 11:40-2:10-4:45-7:20-9:50
Parental Guidance (G) Tue-Thu 12-2:40-5:20-8:05-10:40
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri-Thu 11:50-2:20-4:55-7:30
Royal Opera House: The Nutcracker (STC) Sat 12:55
Silver Linings Playbook (14A) Fri-Mon 12:40-3:40-7:10-10:10 Tue-Thu 12:40-7:10 Fri-Mon 12:15-3:30-6:30-9:30
Skyfall (PG) Fri-Thu 12:20-3:45-7:15-10:35
This Is 40 (14A) Fri-Thu 1:20-4:30-7:40-10:50 Fri-Mon 12:55-4:20-7:30-10:45 Tue-Thu 12-3:45-7:20-10:45
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (14A) Fri-Mon 10
A Werewolf Boy (PG) Fri 12:15-3:35-6:45-9:45 Sat 3:50-6:45-9:45 Sun-Mon 12:15-3:35-6:45-9:45
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Fri-Mon 4-9:35 Tue 11:30 Wed-Thu 11

Surrey/White Rock/ Langley

Clova 5732-176th St., Surrey, 604-541-9527

No Films Showing Today (STC) Tue
The Polar Express (G) Fri 4
Rise of the Guardians (G) Sat-Mon 1:30 Thu 1:30
Skyfall (PG) Fri-Sun 7 Wed-Thu 7
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (14A) Fri-Sun 9:35 Wed-Thu 9:35
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Sat-Mon 3:30 Thu 3:30

Hollywood 3 Cinema 7125-138th Street, Surrey, 604-592-4441

Argo (PG) Fri-Sun 9:10 Tue-Thu 9:10
Flight (14A) Fri-Sun 8:45 Tue-Thu 8:45
Here Comes the Boom (PG) Fri-Thu 4:45 Sat-Thu 12:15
Hotel Transylvania (G) Sat-Thu 12:45
Hotel Transylvania 3D (G) Fri 4:45-6:45 Sat-Thu 2:45-4:45-6:45-6:45
Pitch Perfect (PG) Sat-Thu 2:05
Playing for Keeps (PG) Fri-Thu 7
The Polar Express (G) Sat-Thu 12
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (14A) Fri 4:40-7:05-9:30 Sat-Sun 2:20-4:40-7:05-9:30 Mon 2:20-4:40-7:05 Tue-Thu 2:20-4:40-7:05-9:30

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Strawberry Hill Grande 12161-72nd Ave, Surrey, 604-501-9400

Dabangg 2 (PG) Fri-Thu 1-4-7:05-10
Django Unchained (14A) Tue-Thu 11:45-3:20-7-10:35
Elf (G) Sat 11
The Guilt Trip (PG) Fri-Thu 1:25-4:15-7:25-10:05
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) Fri 2-3:15-5:50-7-9:30-10:45 Sat 11:30-2-3:15-5:50-7-9:30-10:45 Sun-Mon 2-3:15-5:50-7-9:30-10:45 Tue-Thu 11:30-3:15-7-10:45
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) Fri-Sun 12-3:45-7:30-11:15 Mon 12-3:45-7:30 Tue-Thu 12-3:45-7:30-11:15 Fri 2:45-6:30-10:15 Sat 11-2:45-6:30-10:15 Sun-Mon 2:45-6:30-10:15
Jack Reacher (PG) Fri-Thu 1:50-4:50-7:50-10:45
Life of Pi 3D (G) Fri-Thu 1:25-4:30-7:35-10:40
Les Misérables (PG) Tue-Thu 11:40-3:10-6:40-10:10
Monsters, Inc. 3D (G) Fri-Thu 12:20-2:55-5:30-8:05-10:35
Parental Guidance (G) Tue-Thu 12-2:40-5:20-8:05-10:40
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri-Mon 12:10-2:40-5:10-7:45-10:15 Tue-Thu 12:10-2:40-5
Skyfall (PG) Fri-Mon 12:50-4:10-7:30-10:45 Tue-Thu 7:30-10:45
This Is 40 (14A) Fri-Sun 1:30-4:35-7:40-10:50 Mon 1:30-4:35-7:40-10:40 Tue-Thu 1:30-4:35-7:40-10:50

Studio 12 Guildford 15051-101st Ave, Surrey, 604-581-1176

Cirque du Soleil: Worlds Away 3D (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, , Fri 7:10 Dolby Stereo Digital, , Sat-Mon 1:10-7:10 Dolby Stereo Digital, , Tue 4:20-7:10-9:30 Dolby Stereo Digital, , Wed-Thu 1:10-4:20-7:10-9:30
Dabangg 2 (PG) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Tue 3:40-6:40-9:40 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Wed-Thu 12:40-3:40-6:40-9:40
Django Unchained (14A) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Tue 4-7:40-9:15 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Wed-Thu 12:20-4-7:40-9:15
The Guilt Trip (PG) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Fri 3:15-7:20-9:55 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Sat-Sun 12:40-3:15-7:20-9:55 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Mon 12:40-3:15-7:20 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Tue-Thu 3:15-7:20-9:55
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Fri 3:50-7-7:30 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Sat-Sun 12:10-1:15-3:50-7-7:30 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Mon 12:10-1:15-3:50-7-7:30 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Tue 3:50-7:30 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Wed-Thu 12:10-3:50-7:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital, , Fri-Sun 2:45-4:20-6:20-9:15-10 Dolby Stereo Digital, Mon 2:45-4:20-6:20 Dolby Stereo Digital, Tue-Thu 2:45-6:20-10
Jack Reacher (PG) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Fri 3:20-6:50-9:50 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Sat-Sun 12:15-3:20-6:50-9:50 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Mon 12:15-3:20-6:50 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Tue 3:20-6:50-9:50 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Wed-Thu 12:15-3:20-6:50-9:50
Life of Pi (G) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Fri 6:10 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Sat-Mon 12:05-6:10 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Tue 3:10-6:10 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Wed-Thu 12:05-3:10-6:10
Life of Pi 3D (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, Fri-Sun 3:30-9:30 Dolby Stereo Digital, Mon 3:30

The Hobbit HANDOUT

Les Misérables (PG) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Tue 3:30-7 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Wed-Thu 12-3:30-7
Monsters, Inc. 3D (G) Dolby Stereo Digital, , Fri 3-6:30-9 Dolby Stereo Digital, , Sat-Sun 12:30-3-6:30-9 Dolby Stereo Digital, , Mon 12:30-3-6:30 Dolby Stereo Digital, , Tue 3-6:30-9 Dolby Stereo Digital, , Wed-Thu 12:30-3-6:30-9
Parental Guidance (G) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Tue 4:15-7:05-9:45 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Wed-Thu 1:15-4:15-7:05-9:45
Rise of the Guardians (G) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Fri 4:05-6:40-9:10 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Sat-Sun 12:50-4:05-6:40-9:10 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Mon 12:50-4:05-6:40 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Wed-Thu 12:50
Skyfall (PG) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Fri 6:15-9:40 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Sat-Sun 1-6:15-9:40 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Mon 1-6:15
This Is 40 (14A) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Fri 3:10-6:25-9:35 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Sat-Sun 12-3:10-6:25-9:35 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Mon 12-3:10-6:25 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Tue 4:10-6:25-9:35 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, , Wed-Thu 1-4:10-6:25-9:35
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (14A) Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Fri-Sun 2:50-9:20 Digital Presentation, Dolby Stereo Digital, Mon 2:50

Rialto 1732-152nd Street, White Rock, 604-541-9527,

criteriontheatres.com

The Guilt Trip (PG) Fri 7-9 Sat-Sun 2:10-7-9 Mon 2:10 Wed-Thu 2:10-7-9
Lincoln (PG) Fri 7:30 Sat-Sun 2-7:30 Mon 2
Les Misérables (PG) Wed-Thu 2-7:30
No Films Showing Today (STC) Tue

Criterion 4 White Rock 2381 King George Highway, 604-531-7456, criteriontheatres.com

Django Unchained (14A) Wed-Thu 1:45-7:45
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) Fri 7:30 Sat-Sun 1:30-7:30 Mon 1:30 Wed-Thu 1:30-7:30
Jack Reacher (PG) Fri 7-9:25 Sat-Sun 2-7-9:25 Mon 2 Wed-Thu 2-7-9:25
No Films Showing Today (STC) Tue
Parental Guidance (G) Wed-Thu 2:15-7:15-9:20
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri 7:15-9:05 Sat-Sun 2:15-7:15-9:05 Mon 2:15
Skyfall (PG) Fri 7:45 Sat-Sun 1:45-7:45 Mon 1:45

Colossus Langley 20090-91A Ave, Langley, 604-513-8747

Anna Karenina (PG) Fri-Sun 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:20 Mon 1:20-4:20-7:20
Cirque du Soleil: Worlds Away 3D (G) Fri-Mon 1-7 Tue-Thu 12:05-2:40-5:15-7:55-10:25
Django Unchained (14A) Tue-Thu 11:45-1:40-3:20-5:20-7-9-10:35
Elf (G) Sat 11
Flight (14A) Fri-Sun 3:45-9:50 Mon 3:45
The Guilt Trip (PG) Fri-Sun 12:30-3-5:30-8-10:30 Mon 12:30-3-5:30-8 Tue-Thu 12:30-3-5:30-8-10:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (14A) Fri 1:45-2:45-5:30-6:30-9:15-10:15 Sat 11-12:45-2:45-5:30-6:30-9:15-10:15 Sun 1:45-2:45-5:30-6:30-9:15-10:15 Mon 1:45-2:45-5:30-6:30 Tue 2:45-6:30-10:15 Wed-Thu 11-2:45-6:30-10:15
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey — An IMAX 3D Experience (14A) Fri-Sun 11:20-3-6:45-10:30 Mon 11:20-3-6:45 Tue-Thu 11:20-3-6:45-10:30
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey 3D (14A) Fri-Sun 1:15-5-8:45 Mon 1:15-5 Tue-Thu 11:45-3:30-7:15-11 Fri-Sun 11:45-3:30-7:15-11 Mon 11:45-3:30-7:15 Tue-Thu 2:15-6-9:45 Fri-Sun 2:15-6-9:45 Mon 2:15-6
Jack Reacher (PG) Fri-Sun 1:50-4:50-7:50-11 Mon 1:50-4:50-7:50 Tue-Thu 1:50-4:50-7:50-11
Life of Pi 3D (G) Fri-Sun 1:30-4:30-7:35-10:45 Mon 1:30-4:30-7:35 Tue-Thu 1:30-4:30-7:35-10:45
Lincoln (PG) Fri-Sun 12:25-3:50-7:10-10:35 Mon 12:25-3:50-7:10 Tue-Thu 12:25-3:50-7:10-10:35
Les Misérables (PG) Tue-Thu 11:40-1:10-3:10-4:50-6:40-8:30-10:10
Monsters, Inc. 3D (G) Fri-Sun 11:50-2:20-4:55-7:20-9:50 Mon 11:50-2:20-4:55-7:20 Tue-Thu 11:50-2:20-4:55-7:20-9:50
Parental Guidance (G) Tue-Thu 12-2:40-5:20-8:05-10:40
Rise of the Guardians (G) Fri-Sun 12-2:40-5:15-7:45-10:15 Mon 12-2:40-5:15-7:45 Tue-Thu 11:25-2:10-4:45
Royal Opera House: The Nutcracker (STC) Sat 12:55
Silver Linings Playbook (14A) Fri-Sun 1:25-4:35-7:25-10:25 Mon 1:25-4:35-7:25 Tue-Thu 1:25-4:35-7:25-10:25
Skyfall (PG) Fri-Sun 12:50-4:10-7:30-10:55 Mon 12:50-4:10-7:30 Tue-Thu 12:50-4:10-7:30-10:55
This Is 40 (14A) Fri-Sun 1:30-4:35-7:40-10:50 Mon 1:30-4:35-7:40 Tue-Thu 1:30-4:35-7:40-10:50
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 2 (14A) Fri 1:40-4:30-7:20-10:10 Sat 4:30-7:20-10:10 Sun 1:40-4:30-7:20-10:10 Mon 1:40-4:30-7:20 Tue-Thu 7:20-10:10
Wreck-It Ralph (G) Fri-Sun 12:20-2:55-5:25-8-10:35 Mon 12:20-2:55-5:25-8 Tue 11:40 Wed-Thu 11

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TV picks

The Sound of Music airs Sunday on CTV and ABC. HANDOUT

End of the world as we know it?

Some have predicted the apocalypse will strike Friday, and there's some fitting viewing in 2012, like The End is Now (History) and Evacuate Earth (National Geographic Channel). Darker material is also found in a new episode of Haven, which is followed by the Season 3 finale on Showcase.

For the most part, though, the channels are putting out a feel-good vibe with several holiday specials on Friday. Karate Kid headliner Ralph Macchio builds on his Dancing with the Stars experience in the CTV Vancouver-shot dance film Holiday Spin. Vancouver's Allie Bertram (So You Think You Can Dance Canada) co-stars. In the comedy vein is A Christmas Story (CBC) and A Russell Peters Christmas (CTV). For a crooner-carolling vibe, click to Michael Bublé: Home for the Holidays (Citytv, NBC). And for inspiration on how to cook your yuletide meal, there's Chef at Home holiday edition and French Food at Home holiday edition (Food Network Canada).

Deck the Halls

Think you've decked your halls in enviable fashion? You may be humbled by a marathon of Celebrity Holiday Homes, in which three designers create festive decor for the stars on Saturday. Participants include soap star-turned The Biggest Loser host Ali Sweeney, country music artist Jo Dee Messina, game show host Wayne Brady, singer Jordin Sparks and Twisted Sister rocker Dee Snider (HGTV Canada).

Family favourite

Some mirthful holiday programs are repeated ad nauseam at this time of year, but the five-time Oscar-winning The Sound of Music typically isn't one of them. And besides, it's always worth the click to see a dashing Christopher Plummer and hear the dulcet tones of Julie Andrews, who recently admitted that her famous voice has been ruined by an operation to remove non-cancerous throat nodules. It airs Sunday (CTV, ABC).

A Bourdain bonanza

It's a collaboration of cantankerous minds as Sean Penn is featured on the top-notch travel series Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations on Sunday. The famously testy twosome meet up in Haiti, where Penn has helped with relief efforts after the earthquake of 2010 (Discovery World HD).

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Life as they knew it changed, for good

Bomb Girls. Meg Tilly talks about her role as a floor supervisor at Ontario's Victory Munitions during WWII, and how female perspectives were forever altered

ANNE BRODIE
scene@metronews.ca

The Second World War brought Canadian women out of the home and into the workforce. Thousands were employed in an Ontario munitions factory, helping in the war effort, earning their own pay cheques and standing on their own two feet as their men fought overseas.
Bomb Girls, starting season two Jan. 4 ET/PT at 8 p.m., continues as they navigate life at Victory Munitions and on the home front.
Meg Tilly plays Lorna the floor supervisor:

Lorna's a great leader. She's stoic, efficient and level headed. But her home life is unstable.
That's what I love about her. Everybody has light and dark and joys and sorrows and they're all intermingled. There is no good one or bad one. We finished season one with her pregnant and pregnant women aren't allowed to work on the line. Lorna has always been a by-the-rules person and the whole situation changes her. In season two, because of this, she's not so rigid. She's broken several rules. She did things that were wrong if you're going to go black and white. I think she's got more compassion and sees more shades of grey. That's a shift.

How did the work change women?
It contributed to the feminist movement. All these capable women who were underutilized found themselves out there doing useful things. Usually women would be born in a town, be raised in the town, marry and die in the town. And all of a sudden women made decisions. They came from all over the country to work in the plant.
It's really important to show the change that happened with women. Everything changed, that's what (The Second World War) was to us. The focus is usually on the sacrifices of the men, but now we see the women and how they changed our country and how they effected change. And now I see that time so differently. I think back to my grandparents. I wish they were alive now so I could talk to them about what their experiences were like. People are lucky if they still have people alive who can talk about it. It wasn't that long ago.

What happened to the women after the war?
That was a shock. Those were the dark years, some of them call it. All of a sudden it was over. And the men came home and it was changed. And everyone's trying to pretend it was exactly the way it was before the war and it wasn't. Everyone was dealing with this huge shift and women lost loved ones,

Meg Tilly plays Lorna, the floor supervisor, in Global's Bomb Girls. HANDOUT

fathers, brothers, lovers, husbands and they're dealing with other loss, loss of identity and self. They worked and grew and bloomed and felt useful for something other than baby rearing and cleaning the house, and then suddenly they had to ask for permission to buy a hat. I remember seeing interviews from this one woman. She said it only takes so long to clean the house. You're working hard, and then it's gone. And the woman said, "Until I had my baby, those were the dark years."

Bomb Girls is topical, with references to events in Oshawa or the possibility of Nazi planes flying over Canada.
I didn't know how close we came to ... I didn't know. The storylines are amazing. I read (Second World War) tweets every day — 3,000 killed in bombing in England and you see photos of the streets and think, "Wow, how is it possible?" I didn't realize the extent of what happened. You read Hitler meets with so and so. Hitler says he's not invading anyone, and then he invades.

There were Nazi prison camps in Canada?
I know. I didn't know that. And that's in the show.

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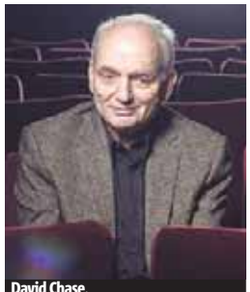
David Chase. On the infamous Sopranos ending

In a recent interview with David Chase about his new film, Not Fade Away, the conversation inevitably turned to The Sopranos and its infamous ending. Below are Chase's comments on watching the final episode for the first time two years ago, with only an occasional interjection from a reporter:



David Chase.
VICTORIA WILL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"There was something else I was saying that was more important than whether Tony Soprano lived or died."
David Chase

"I thought the episode itself might have been kind of a dud, but it wasn't. I was proud of it. I was satisfied that we'd done something. What I didn't understand was that the ending would be so talked-about that it would completely obliterate the rest of the episode that came before it. No one ever even saw it, talked about it, mentioned it or anything about it — and I think, didn't even interpret it correctly because all they talked about was that ending. I did not know that would happen.

I think a lot of people thought they were being made a fool of, that I was being really meta — is that the word? — and postmodern or just showing my quote-unquote 'contempt' for the audience or going 'Ha, ha, ha. It's just a TV show.' None of that was what was going on. That was the best ending I knew to come up with and I thought it said some things, but people didn't get it because they were angry. Or maybe it wasn't executed well.

I do wish that connection had been made better. To me the question is not whether Tony lived or died, and that's all that people wanted to know: 'Well, did he live or did he die? You didn't finish the show. You didn't answer the question.' That's preposterous. There was something else I was saying that was more important than whether Tony Soprano lived or died. About the fragility of all of it. The whole show had been about time in a way, and the time allotted on this Earth. That whole trip out to California was all about that — what people called a dream sequence. And all the dream sequences within the show. Tony was dealing in mortality every day. He was dishing out life and death. And he was not happy. He was getting everything he wanted, that guy, but he wasn't happy. All I wanted to do was present the idea of how short life is and how precious it is. The only way I felt I could do that was to rip it away. And I think people did get it. It made them upset emotionally, but intellectually they didn't follow it. And that could very well be bad execution."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Could it be boiling-over drama on Downton Abbey this season?

Interview. Downton's cook weighs in on life on set and gives us a taste of how things may pan out for the Crawley family and their minions in the third season

STEPHEN ERAMO
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In 2010, a British-American period TV drama called Downton Abbey took the world by storm. Three seasons later, fans still eagerly tune in to watch the latest goings-on in the lives of the aristocratic Crawley family and their servants, all of whom live together in the fictional Yorkshire country estate of Downton Abbey.

Keeping everyone well-fed is Downton's cook, Mrs. Beryl Patmore, played by the lovely and talented Lesley Nicol. Although it was two years ago, she will not soon forget her first time stepping foot into Downton as Mrs. Patmore.

"I should explain that all my scenes are shot at Ealing Film Studios in London," says Nicol. "The kitchen, the servants' quarters and hall, and the corridors are all sets at Ealing, and then an hour away is Highclere Castle (which plays as Downton Abbey). They shoot all the upstairs scenes there, and because Mrs. Patmore, for legitimate reasons, doesn't stray far from her kitchen, I rarely get to Highclere.

"So for me to film a scene in the library with Hugh Bonneville (the Earl of Grantham) was quite extraordinary, not only because it's such an amazing room and building, but also to watch my character go from the safety of her kitchen to be with her boss, who she hardly knows and is scared of. That was very memorable for me and great fun, too."

Quoted

"Although I can't speak in detail, I can say that in season three, you'll see much more of Mrs. Patmore and Mrs. Hughes banding together ... which was wonderful to investigate."
Lesley Nicol

A skilled cook who knows her away around a kitchen, Mrs. Patmore can sometimes be a bit bossy, especially with the younger staff. She means well, though, and Nicol has been able to show viewers that along with other facets of her character.

"What's brilliant about (series creator/executive producer/writer) Julian Fellowes is that he gives you one aspect of a character, and then because of circumstances you see another side," says the actress. "So when, for instance, we find out about Mrs. Patmore's nephew, who was apparently shot for cowardice (in the military), that opens up a whole other seam of her life and reveals a very vulnerable woman.

Lesley Nicol plays Mrs. Beryl Patmore, Downton's sometimes bossy cook.
CARNIVAL FILM & TELEVISION LIMITED 2012 FOR MASTERPIECE

"Although I can't speak in detail, I can say that in season three, you'll see much more of Mrs. Patmore and Mrs. Hughes (Phyllis Logan) banding together rather than opposed to each other, which was also wonderful to investigate."

With Downton Abbey renewed for a fourth season, Nicol will once again be reprising her role of Mrs. Patmore, and that suits her just fine. "It's a lovely job and I feel very blessed to be in it," she enthuses. **DOWNTON ABBEY SEASON THREE PREMIERES JAN. 6 ON MASTERPIECE ON PBS. ALL THREE SEASONS BEGIN AIRING ON VISIONTV ON JAN. 2 AT 9 P.M. ET/6 P.M. PT**

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The hardest working man in music

David Guetta. Today's most popular DJ talks about the benefits and drawbacks of the Internet and gives us his ultimate playlist

RICHARD PECKETT
Metro World News

Call him popular, or today's 'it' feature guy, but however you say it, David Guetta is in high demand. HANDOUT

David Guetta, one of the most worked with musicians today, spoke to Metro about working with Will.i.am, the social networking revolution and who are the most talented DJs of today.

How would you describe your relationship with Will.i.am?
He's a friend. We've known each other since I produced I Gotta Feeling and anything that he comes out with is always genius, so I kind of trust him with closed eyes.

What's he like to work with?
He's like a bit of a crazy scientist who has difficulty in only doing one thing at a time.

We just open the mics up and he doesn't write anything — it just comes out of him — and it's impressive to see that. He's a party guy and that's my life.

What do you think of the i.am+ and social networking?
You know, I started organizing raves when I was very young and it was against the law. Radio and TV were not playing our music in France and the only way to have events and DJ was to keep tight with the people who were from the scene. It was text messages, phone numbers, flyers, stuff like this, you know.

So now of course with technology, it's evolving, but it's the same principle, only it's not just my city, but the world. Literally anything that allows me to share my passion and get closer to the fans is great.

So you think that the Internet and YouTube are a positive for the industry?
Amazing, absolutely. It's made music so democratic because it's cheap to produce music to a professional quality and you can also market it through a laptop. Nowadays, it's about creativity, the music itself and it's not like the head of the record company, the head of a TV channel and the head of a radio channel are going to sit down over lunch and decide who's the next star.

Do you think that there are more talented DJs today?
I don't think that there are more talented people around now but there are more opportunities for them to expose their ability. Talent is about continual good ideas and a career. It's way more competitive. Everything is so fast. It's easier to rise and also quicker to fall.

You played to 3 million people last year on Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro. Do you prefer bigger venues?
Not necessarily, I love both. I really love playing Pacha in Ibiza, but now those kind of venues are a little small for me. This New Year, I'm going to play Mamita's Beach, Playa del Carmen in Mexico, which isn't as big but I love Latin and South America.

David Guetta's ultimate NYE playlist

1. **David Guetta ft Taped Rai.** Just One Last Time (Extended Mix) (What A Music)
2. **Ludacris ft Usher & David Guetta.** Rest Of My Life (Extended Mix Edit) (Def Jam)
3. **Rihanna ft David Guetta.** Right Now (Def Jam)
4. **Alesso.** Clash (Refune)
5. **David Guetta & Nicky Romero.** Metropolis (Jack Back)
6. **Thomas Gold.** MIAO (Fly Eye)
7. **Daddy's Groove.** Turn The Lights Down (David Guetta Re-Work) (Jack Back)
8. **Chuckie & Junxterjack.** Make Some Noise (Cr2/Big Beat)
9. **Tony Romera.** Pandor (Protocol)
10. **David Guetta ft Ne-Yo & Akon.** Play Hard (Edit) (What A Music)

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Maintaining the voice that has maintained his career

Italian tenor. Andrea Bocelli talks about his new album, ignoring the luxury items in life and his belief in the goodness of people

AMANDA QUEIRÓS
Metro World News

The Italian tenor who gave a pop touch to classical music confesses his love for opera, soccer and good food and explains how he keeps his voice and his popularity worldwide

At the age of 54, the Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli reaps impressive numbers for an opera singer. On Jan. 29, he releases Passione, in which he sings in six languages.

He spoke to Metro about the mix between popular and classic music that made him famous across the world.

Andrea Bocelli credits his vocal success to cutting out the luxurious things in life. GETTY IMAGES

Why have you decided to merge classical and popular music?
Actually, I try to split them up. Classical music and pop are two different universes, each with its own difficulties, peculiarities, depth and artistic dignity.

Of course, in presentations in arenas, I try to sing classical music to propagate it better. I do not really like the term crossover. I also have no need to label what I do.

What are the sacrifices demanded by your career?
The most difficult in my profession has always been the separation of those who I love.

In regards to that, I especially think about my parents and how brave they were to teach me how to be brave by sending me to study far from home when I was still a boy so I could have a better life later.

How do you preserve your voice?
I never stop trying to perfect the technique.

This lesson I learned from my friend and great tenor Luciano Pavarotti. He taught me to sing effortlessly and give the best of myself — something essential, or otherwise there would be no more singing at my age.

I follow a strict diet before tours and opera seasons, having an almost monastic life, forgetting wine, coffee, pasta and other important joys of life.

The opera singer in general is a gourmand and refuses to be limited — and I'm no exception. But one problem is the reflux, almost a "working disease" of singers, which requires me to be more careful at the table.

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Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson

Stewart and Pattinson host Christmas party

Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson are reportedly getting pretty domestic, even going so far as to host a small Christmas party for their friends, according to Hollywood Life. "Kristen and Rob had a small, intimate Christmas tree decorating party on Sunday. They have a gorgeous tree set up at Kristen's, where Rob pretty much lives now," a source says. "They are not living with each other, but they are spending plenty of time with each other and they do sleep over often. They are in a really magical place right now despite some lingering trust issues on Rob's side."

Claire Danes

Danes welcomes baby Cyrus

Homeland star Claire Danes and husband Hugh Dancy welcomed their first child, a son, this week, her rep confirms to People magazine. Cyrus Christopher Dancy was born Monday "exactly at 3 p.m.," Dancy reportedly told friends and family in an email, according to Page Six. "Mother and baby are well, healthy and happy." Danes and Dancy first met filming Evening in 2006 and married in 2009.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

The weirdest celebrity hookups of 2012

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Rosario Dawson and Danny Boyle
A 22-year age difference hasn't stopped director Danny Boyle and actress Rosario Dawson from "canoodling" all over London, per the brilliant and descriptive London press. The May/December romance apparently bloomed on the set of their new movie Trance. Was it the Olympics' bizarre opening ceremony that took Dawson's heart?

Simon Cowell and Carmen Electra
The rumours are kind of true: "She's not my girlfriend," Cowell, 53, explained when he called in to On Air with Ryan Seacrest yesterday about the rumours between the two stars. "We're people who date." How very "bro" of you, Simon.

Avril Lavigne and Chad Kroeger
To the surprise of most, the singers got engaged this year after quietly dating for six months, Lavigne's rep confirmed to People magazine. "A romantic relationship blossomed as they spent time writing together," the rep says. This will be the Canadian singer's second marriage after splitting from Sum 41 frontman Deryck Whibley in 2009. Kroeger "makes her so happy," a source tells the magazine. "Both of their families could not be more excited."

Bobbi Kristina Brown and her "adopted brother"
It was announced on the reality show, The Houstons: On Our Own that Bobbi Kristina Brown and Nick Gordon, who lived with Whitney Houston from the time he was 12, are indeed engaged. Of course, Gordon was never officially adopted by Houston and he isn't blood-related to Bobbi Kristina, but the pseudo-siblings have referred to each other as "brother" and "sister," which, you

Johnny Depp

She's just not that into you

Newly single Johnny Depp is reportedly hung up on his Rum Diary co-star, Amber Heard.

The only problem is the feeling isn't exactly mutual, according to Radar Online. "Johnny and Amber have been having a lot of fun spending time with one another, but Amber keeps telling him she's not interested in being with him in a monogamous relationship," a source says.

"She says she feels she's too young for him, but the main factor is Amber prefers dating women over men and has no interest in committing to a guy — even if he is Johnny Depp."

Twitter

@JuddApatow
Five percent battery left on my iPhone. I shall tweet till it runs out of gas. So nervous about the release of the movie. Sleep? Ha!

@Sethrogen
Normally, talk shows are very scripted. Tonight, Letterman didn't ask me any of the pre determined questions. It was terrifying.

@samantharonson
Thinking about going to some AA meetings to meet some new drivers, I mean friends.

@SethMacFarlane
He's making a list, and checking it twice, and then like five more times 'cause he's got crazy OCD.

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Santa's cookies 2.0

Chocolate Shortbread Melt-Aways

This recipe makes five dozen small cookies. DAN CLAPSON

These cookies have a chocolate intensity that balances with their buttery richness, and when piped onto a baking tray, they look like chocolate kisses. They are a good addition to a holiday cookie tin.

- 1 cup (250 ml) unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup (250 ml) icing sugar, sifted
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups (375 ml) all-purpose flour
- 1/3 cup (80 ml) Dutch process cocoa powder, sifted
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) cornstarch
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml salt)

1. Preheat the oven to 325 F (160 C) and line 2 baking trays with parchment paper.

2. Cream the butter and icing sugar together until smooth. Beat in the vanilla extract.

3. Add the flour, cocoa, cornstarch, and salt, and beat until evenly incorporated.

4. Spoon the soft cookie dough into a piping bag fitted with a large plain tip, and pipe 1-inch (2.5 cm) "kisses" onto the baking trays, leaving a 2-inch (5 cm) space between the cookies.

5. Bake the cookies for 12 to 14 minutes, until they lift away from the parchment paper without sticking. Let the cookies cool completely on the tray before removing. The cookies will keep in an airtight container for up to 3 days. **FROM ANNA OLSON'S BACK TO BAKING**

Holiday baking. As the undisputed queen of sweets, Anna Olson knows a thing or two about delicious treats

DAN CLAPSON
life@metronews.ca

Whether it's gingerbread, yule logs or some shortbread, with the holiday season comes the sweet smell of desserts in the air.

Food Network personality Anna Olson took some time out of her busy baking schedule to chat about what she's whipping up for the holidays.

And, no surprise, she is as sweet as sugar!

Anna Olson. SUBMITTED

What's the first memory you have of baking over the holidays?
Making Cherry Walnut Icebox cookies with my grandma.

I still make these cookies each year. It's not Christmas without them.

Do you and your family have any Christmas traditions when it comes to the baking?
My mom and I book a day each year to bake our family recipes as well as make perogies.

Then we go out for dinner to toast our accomplishment — and so we don't have to do any more dishes!

Fruitcake always gets a bad rap. Where do people go wrong with it?
I think people don't think you can alter the fruit and nut combination, but you have a great deal of flexibility.

So long as the total measurement of fruit and nuts is the same, feel free to switch out the candied peel for dried cherries or cranberries, or replace the prunes with figs!

Any tips to ensure a sturdy gingerbread house that will stand the test of time and also small hands picking candy off of it?
For a gingerbread house that needs to remain intact for more than a week, then it really shouldn't be made to be eaten. In this case, use vegetable shortening instead of butter in the cookie dough. For an icing that holds up well, use a recipe that calls for meringue powder. It sets up firmly but it's also easy to work with when soft.

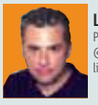
A Christmas cookie can take many shapes and forms. What is your go-to variety?
Other than my Grandma's Cherry Walnut cookies, I must have my Toblerone Shortbread onhand the entire month of December.

Your love for baking and sweets is undeniable, but is there one thing you don't like to whip up in your kitchen?
I've never really clicked with rum balls. I always pass them over if they are on a cookie platter and I don't make them at home.

Last, but perhaps most important, do you leave milk and cookies out for Santa on Christmas Eve?
You bet! I need to stay on the nice list!

Liquid Assets

White wines for zombies with Santa hats?



LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
liquidassets@eastlink.ca

I write this column assuming the world hasn't ended today. If I'm wrong, here are some red wine suggestions to match with turkey for all you roaming hordes of zombies who may or may not have taken over the earth.

One of the wine world's most heinous old wives' tales is that white wines only go with white meats and red wines only go with red meats. If something has to end today, please let it be that thick slice of baloney.

You have to think about more than the star of the meal when it comes to a liquid pairing. Considering all the side dishes means a meal featuring the grand gobbler can cast a wide net catching many red wines.

For some outside the box drinking, think a mid-priced Italian Chianti, a robust Rioja from Spain or a fresh flavoured merlot from California, Australia or Chile.

As a long time pinot-file, I tend to crave a fruit-forward pinot noir when carving. New Zealand knows its way around the grape and the 2011 Oyster Bay Pinot Noir ($19.95 - $24.99) oozes ample very berry fruit that should appeal to all of your table mates, whether alive ... or living dead.

Happy holidays!

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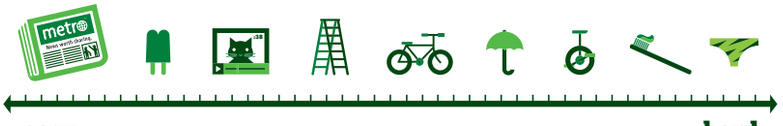

This holiday, entertain like Martha

Martha Stewart. She doesn't do appetizers, won't serve red wine and — surprise! — sends email invites.

TINA CHADHA
Metro World News in New York

Dream of hosting epic get-togethers that will spread like wildfire on Instagram and Pinterest, but have yet to organize something more involved than cheese and crackers?

You, aspiring hostess, need a thought-out game plan, so we checked in with domestic powerhouse Martha Stewart (consider it an early Christmas present).

Start with the right company

"The first thing I do is create my guest list. I have a basic list of my friends and then people who I've added to it throughout the year. I send out a save-the-date. Then I send out an email invitation — but it's embedded in my email so it opens immediately. You don't have to go clicking here and clicking there. It's very important to me. I don't click on an envelope that opens up. Right click here and download pictures — I don't go for that stuff."

Plan your menu

"Next I start on the menu. What do I really want to cook? What do I really want to serve? After the menu planning comes the shopping list."

Dive into a theme

"Two weeks before the party, make sure you have everything you need for decorating and (put it up). We lost a lot of trees in Sandy, so I'm using a lot of fallen trees as decoration. All my big trays are slabs of wood cut from the trees that fell down. And I made beautiful coasters from three-inch-diameter branches that are sliced very thinly. You have to think of a theme — is it woodland or what is it? I have a theme for all of my parties. I think it's fun."

Create signature drinks

"Make a really good drink from fresh juices, the best ingredients and serve it in beautiful glasses. I'll also serve white wine. I don't serve red wine in my house because I don't want people to spill it — unless it's a seated dinner. We're going to have homemade bloody marys with homemade tomato juice, eggnog and hot mulled white wine. You have to be a little creative, thoughtful and adventurous."

Dazzle at your party

Here are Martha's top tips

- **Mingle.** "Make sure you make time to be friendly to your guests and acknowledge everybody's presence. Try to matchmake a little with the people that you think should meet each other."
- **Please be seated.** "I like to set the table for a plated and served dinner unless I'm having a very large crowd. When creating a seating chart for served dinners, I always break up couples and seat new people next to one another. I also always put myself in the least-comfortable spot."

Martha's tips will ensure your party is a success. GETTY IMAGES

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Last Chance: Goh Ballet's Nutcracker

Always a sure sign of Christmas, The Centre in Vancouver for Performing Arts (777 Homer St.) welcomes the Nutcracker to the stage for one weekend only. Set to Tchaikovsky's stunning score, get lost in the world of the Sugar Plum Fairy in this unforgettable production that will have you on the edge of your seats and awe-inspired. Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m., and at 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. For more information visit gohnutcracker.com.

Just opened: The Parlour Restaurant

Located in Vancouver's Yaletown neighbourhood, The Parlour Restaurant features a stylishly laid back atmosphere, spacious lounge and dining area. An extensive bar area plays host to a DJ booth (goes live from Thursday to Saturday), innovative cocktails, craft beer and seven wines on tap. Their menu boasts a dozen different styles of wood-stone fired pizza and a tasty array of classic comfort cuisine and share plates. 1011 Hamilton St. Visit theparlourrestaurants.com for full menu and info.

Screening: The End of the World Part III: 2012

Did the Mayan's really get it right? Are we all upon the end of the world, or is it all a bunch of hype? Whatever your take is on subject of the end of civilization, lighten things up with a Hollywood-style screening of Columbia Pictures' own 2012. The H.R. Macmillan Space Centre is hosting part three in their series this Friday at 8 p.m. and admission to the flick is only $10.75. For more info visit spacecentre.ca.

Winter Solstice Lantern Festival

Celebrate the season and officially welcome winter by attending the 19th annual Winter Solstice celebration (dong zhi) taking place at Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden (578 Carrall St.) Friday from 6 - 10 p.m. Artists re-create the beauty of the gardens through the creation of whimsical pieces. Enjoy Dragon Spice tea and live entertainment courtesy of an interactive drumming demo and performances by the Black Bear Rebels and the Real Treble Makers. vancouverchinesegarden.com.

The Original Ugly Christmas Sweater Party

If you're looking for an excuse to dust off that knitted holiday treasure, this Friday's Original Ugly Sweater Party is a definite must-do. Now celebrating 11 years, this annual event has become a global trend — and a festive (if not fashionable) fun time. Takes place this Friday at 8 p.m. at the Commodore Ballroom (868 Granville St.).

Bright Nights – Stanley Park Christmas Train

Board the decked-out holiday train and tour Stanley Park at its festive best or simply tour your way around the sparkling village. More than two million twinkling lights set the seasonal stage as animated displays come to life. Enjoy the sound of classic Christmas tunes as you sip hot cocoa and are dazzled by the wintery scene. Partial proceeds from ticket sales support the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund. Daily until Jan. 1.

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Vancouver's best: A look back at 2012

CAM TUCKER
cam.tucker@metronews.ca

We could talk about the National Hockey League lockout. But why regurgitate that childish, ego-driven mess? Instead, here's a piece counting down the six biggest sporting moments in Vancouver this year.

Photos by Getty Images

1

Canucks flunk in first round

Back-to-back Presidents' Trophy titles as the NHL's best regular-season team didn't equal playoff success.

The Canucks, Stanley Cup finalists in 2011, were stunned in the first round of this year's playoffs, losing to the L.A. Kings in five games.

Cory Schneider took over the starting goaltender job from Roberto Luongo, which has kick-started trade rumours that Luongo is going either back to the Florida Panthers or to the Toronto Maple Leafs.

2

B.C.'s hopes disappear in division final

The Lions appeared destined to repeat as Grey Cup champs. They rolled their way to a 13-5 regular-season record and earned home-field advantage in the West Division final.

But things began to turn when quarterback Travis Lulay missed two games in the final stretch of the regular season with a sore throwing shoulder. He just couldn't reproduce the magic of 2011 when he returned fully to the offence in a playoff loss to Calgary.

3

What-ifs surround Whitecaps

The Whitecaps' first-ever MLS Cup playoff appearance brings up one question: What could've happened if Barry Robson, Kenny Miller or Matt Watson had scored to give the club a two-goal lead over the L.A. Galaxy in the single-game elimination round?

All three players had glorious chances within seconds of each other to put the Whitecaps ahead of L.A. by two goals in the second half.

However, the furious flurry proved unsuccessful.

The Whitecaps eventually lost 2-1, ending a commendable turnaround from the club's 2011 season, when Vancouver produced a paltry six wins.

4

No other like Gutierrez

Rarely is horse racing a mainstream story in Vancouver. Mario Gutierrez changed that. After six years competing at Hastings Racecourse, Gutierrez, aboard I'll Have Another, won the Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes — the first jewels of horse racing's Triple Crown. The local jockey, by way of Mexico, became an instant celebrity in Vancouver, and throughout North America.

His bid for that mostly elusive prize never came to fruition. I'll Have Another was scrapped from the Belmont Stakes due to tendonitis.

5

Canadian women set tone for Olympic excellence at BC Place

Canadian flags flew at the CONCACAF women's Olympic qualifying tournament in Vancouver, bringing back memories of overwhelming patriotism from the 2010 Games.

The Canadian women's soccer team advanced to the London Olympics thanks to a victory over Mexico in the CONCACAF semi-final before a crowd of 22,954 red-and-white-clad fans at BC Place Stadium.

Canada's tournament came to an end with a 4-0 loss to the No. 1-ranked Americans in the qualifier final.

The two nations would meet again in an emotionally charged Olympic semifinal that produced a heartbreaking and controversial result for Canada.

6

Canadians play comeback kids to defend championship

The Vancouver Canadians, the short-season single-A affiliate of the Toronto Blue Jays, successfully defended their Northwest League title.

And they did so in dramatic, come-from-behind fashion with a 12-9 win over the Boise Hawks in the third and final game of the championship series in September.

The C's trailed the Hawks by two runs with only two innings to play, before exploding for seven runs in the top of the eighth inning on their way to victory.

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NFL

Packers look to Seahawks to help even the score

Pay up, Seahawks.

The Green Bay Packers have put the Inaccurate Reception behind them, and they've done their best not to begrudge Seattle the win that really wasn't. But karma has a way of coming back around, and the Seahawks have a chance to put things right this weekend.

"Without looking in the past, we have to root for a team we fell short to," Packers linebacker Clay Matthews said Thursday. "So that's how it goes. We'll control our own destiny by winning these out and hopefully we can get some help along the way."

San Francisco (10-3-1) is a game ahead of Green Bay (10-4) for the NFC's No. 2 seed and Seattle plays the 49ers on Sunday night. Beat the Niners and the Seahawks can essentially get the Packers back to where they would have been had replacement referees not blown that call back in September. Providing they beat Tennessee on Sunday afternoon, the Packers will find themselves rooting for the Seahawks.

"Yeah, but we'd love to have that bye, be sitting there at the 1 or 2 seed," quarterback Aaron Rodgers said. "So at this point, we're trying to have a short memory, kind of rooting for the teams that you need to win."

The Inaccurate Reception was arguably the worst call of the NFL season. Green Bay safety M.D. Jennings appeared to intercept a last-ditch pass to Seahawks wide receiver Golden Tate in the end zone only to have replacement referees rule it a touchdown, giving Seattle a 14-12 win.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MacKinnon dreaming of gold this Christmas

World juniors. Highly touted 17-year-old living dream with chance for glory with Team Canada

PHILIP CROUCHER
Metro in Halifax

Nathan MacKinnon will wake up Christmas morning far away from the comforts of home.

He'll open his eyes in a Russian hotel room next to a teammate who, like him, is spending the holidays thousands of miles from the family gatherings and traditions he's come to love.

Still, there is no place MacKinnon would rather be this holiday season. That's because the 17-year-old Cole Harbour, N.S., standout with the Halifax Mooseheads is fulfilling a dream — one shared by most teenagers who lace up their skates — to play for Canada at the world junior hockey championships.

"It's different, but I'm doing something that I love. I'm having a lot of fun," he said Thursday by phone after playing in Canada's first exhibition game, a 3-2 loss to Finland. "It would be nice to be home for Christmas, but this is an excellent thing."

MacKinnon, who doesn't turn 18 until September, is the youngest member of Team Canada, but goes into the tournament with plenty of expectations.

A potential first overall pick in next year's NHL draft, MacKinnon will be looked upon to play an important role among 18- and 19-year-olds.

Whatever that role turns out to be, MacKinnon is ready to accept it. With the Mooseheads, he's on the No. 1 line and getting plenty of power-play time. With Team Canada, he could be used as a 13th forward and get the odd shift on special teams.

"I want to help the team and I want to be an impact player," said MacKinnon, who sits third in Quebec Major Junior Hockey League scoring with 22 goals and 30 assists in 30 games. "But I'm going to do whatever role I'm given and hopefully the team can be successful."

MacKinnon is the first Nova Scotian to play at the world juniors for Canada since 2007 and 2008, when Brad Marchand of Hammonds Plains cracked the team.

Nathan MacKinnon, from Sidney Crosby's hometown of Cole Harbour, N.S., is living his dream overseas with a spot on Canada's world junior roster. The youngest player on Team Canada is considered a possible No. 1 pick in the 2013 NHL draft. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"It was a cool experience — a world junior game — it was exciting. And I'm sure every game is going to get more and more exciting."

Nathan MacKinnon, on playing for Team Canada in a 3-2 exhibition loss to Finland Thursday

Exhibition play

'Discipline the subplot' in Canada's loss

It was an early wake-up call for Canada's world junior team.

Undisciplined and out of sorts, the Canadians dropped an exhibition game to host Finland 3-2 on Thursday. Two of the Finnish goals were scored with a 5-on-3 power play during a game that saw Canada assessed nine minor penalties in total.

"I think the challenge for us obviously is coming together as a team," said Canadian coach Steve Spott. "It's our first game. But ultimately I think discipline is the subplot here tonight, where we have to get used to the standard of officiating and deal with our discipline a lot smarter than we did tonight."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ivor Wynne reduced to rubble in Hamilton

Construction crews continue to dismantle Ivor Wynne Stadium, the former home of the CFL's Tiger-Cats, on Thursday in Hamilton, Ont. The work is expected to be completed in February. SCOTT GARDNER/THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

CFL

Condell follows Austin to Ticats

Tommy Condell is following Kent Austin to the Hamilton Tiger-Cats.

Austin hired Condell as Hamilton's offensive co-ordinator and receivers coach Thursday. The move comes three days after Austin was named the Ticats' head coach, GM and vice-president of football operations.

Condell joins the Ticats after serving as Austin's assistant head coach and wide receivers coach for three seasons at Cornell.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CFL

Hall of Famer Keys passes away at 89

Former B.C. Lions head coach Eagle Keys died Thursday morning at the age of 89.

Keys coached the Lions from 1971 to 1975, and appeared in four Grey Cup games as a coach between 1960 and 1969, winning once. He also played in three Grey Cups, winning the title twice as a player. He played his final game — the 1954 cup with Edmonton — with a broken bone in his knee, according to his Canadian Football Hall of Fame profile. METRO

NCAA

B.C.'s Levins named top track athlete

Cam Levins capped a memorable 2012 in style on Wednesday.

The long-distance runner from Black Creek, B.C., won The Bowerman award as the NCAA's top male track and field athlete after a standout year for Southern Utah University.

Levins' time of 28 minutes, 7.14 seconds was the best 10,000-metre time at the NCAA outdoor crowns event since 1984. He also competed for Canada at the London Olympics.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL just a shot away from pulling the plug on season

Lockout letdown.
With labour talks at an impasse, cancelling the season may soon be Bettman's only option

The NHL has moved one step closer to calling off another season because of a labour dispute.

Regular-season games through Jan. 14 were wiped off the schedule on Thursday afternoon, setting up a potential timeline for the league's collective bargaining negotiations with the NHL Players' Association.

It was likely the final batch of games that will be cancelled during the lockout. If commissioner Gary Bettman holds true to his word that the league must play at least a 48-game schedule with playoffs ending in June, the next announcement from the league will be either a new CBA or a second cancelled season in eight years.

"When it gets to the point where we can't play a season with integrity, with a representative schedule, then we'll be done," Bettman said this month. "If you go back in history, in '94-95 I think we played 48 games. I can't imagine wanting to play fewer than that."

A total of 625 games have been cancelled because of the current lockout, which represents 50.8 per cent of the season. The all-star game in Columbus has also been axed.

When the NHL staged a 48-game season after the 1994-95 lockout, the CBA was agreed to on Jan. 11 and the puck was dropped on Jan. 20. The regular season ran through May 3 and saw the Stanley Cup awarded on June 24 — thanks to sweeps in four of the last seven playoff series.

The league contemplated the possibility of a 28-game season in 2004-05 before finally cancelling play on Feb. 16.

There was no statement included with Thursday's announcement of the additional game cancellations.

In an email, deputy commissioner Bill Daly declined to characterize whether Jan. 15 could be viewed as the last date to salvage a shortened schedule.

Talks have been at a standstill since the NHLPA last presented a proposal on Dec. 6 in New York. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHLPA vote

Pushing for a disclaimer

National Hockey League players are expected to be overwhelmingly in favour of an interest of disclaimer when their vote on the motion wraps up Friday.

The players appear to be pushing full ahead for the disclaimer, which would see the players' executive board give the power to Don Fehr and his leadership group to remove themselves from representing the players.

Under that scenario, the union would disband and force a court settlement to end the lockout. But that step has not been finalized.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Dashing through the snow

Canada's Erin Mielzynski speeds past a pole during the first run of a women's alpine skiing World Cup event on Thursday in Are, Sweden. Seventeen-year-old American Mikaela Shiffrin earned her first career victory, winning a night slalom ahead of Swedish home favourite Frida Hansdotter. Mielzynski, of Guelph, Ont., finished fifth. GIOVANNI AULETTA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA. T-Wolves' sharp shooting stops rolling Thunder

Oklahoma City's Reggie Jackson, left, defends against Timberwolves guard Ricky Rubio on Thursday in Minneapolis. HANNAH FOSLIEN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

J.J. Barea ended Oklahoma City's 12-game winning streak almost all by himself.

Barea scored 14 of his 18 points in the fourth quarter to lift the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 99-93 victory over the Thunder on Thursday night.

Kevin Love had 28 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists and Nikola Pekovic had 24 points and 10 rebounds for Minnesota.

But it was Barea who was the key, scoring 12 straight at one point for the Wolves to hold off the team with the best record in the league.

Kevin Durant had 33 points, seven rebounds and six assists for the Thunder, who had not lost a game since Nov. 23 at Boston.

Barea was also a nuisance on defence, drawing an offensive foul on Durant with 2:24 to play.

The normally super-cool Durant uncharacteristically lost his composure, picking up a technical foul for arguing the call as well.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jabari Parker

High-school hoops star is Duke-bound

Prized prospect Jabari Parker of Chicago's Simeon Career Academy, one of the most highly touted recruits in years, is headed to Duke.

With a national TV audience watching, he announced his decision at a news conference on Thursday. Parker can't sign his letter of intent until April 17, but he made his intentions clear with one highly anticipated oral commitment.

He said his decision really came down to choosing between three schools, with the Florida Gators and Michigan State Spartans right there with the Blue Devils. In the end, he chose to play for Mike Krzyzewski for at least a year before making what many believe will ultimately be a jump to the NBA.

Parker received the Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year award for Illinois last March after leading Simeon to its third straight state championship while averaging 19.5 points and 8.9 rebounds as a junior.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Whatever your age or position, you are about to get the chance to move up in the world. Powerful people will be watching you closely today and over the weekend, so make sure they like what they see.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Times are good and about to get even better. It may take two or three days for things to pick up speed but once they do, you will be on a roller coaster ride of fun and games. Hang on and enjoy the experience.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Most likely you are reading too much into a situation that is of no real importance but for your own peace of mind, you should investigate further. If someone is trying to take you for a ride — get off quick!

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You will notice a subtle change in the way other people react to you today. But it is the way that you choose to behave towards them that will determine whether the next few weeks are going to be easy or difficult.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
The Sun's change of signs puts the emphasis on matters of a work nature, and also on your physical health. The two are closely related. In a nutshell: If you work too hard your wellbeing may suffer. Slow down!

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You don't have to do anything special today: The Sun's change of signs will do it all for you. One of the most active times of the year is about to begin, so prepare yourself mentally for what lies ahead.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
No matter how many interesting things may be taking place in the world, you must focus exclusively on the needs and desires of loved ones today. There has never been a better time to show how much you care.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 2 04 - Nov. 22
Keep your options open today because there will be all sorts of new and interesting events taking place and you need to be free to react to any or all of them. Part of the meaning of life is to have fun.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
The past few weeks have been hectic to say the least and the momentum you have built up will keep you going for quite some time. But don't forget you have limits.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You may be eager to get started on a new project but think before you act. Make sure you are well prepared. Any day can be a new beginning. Though, yes, this one is more special than most.

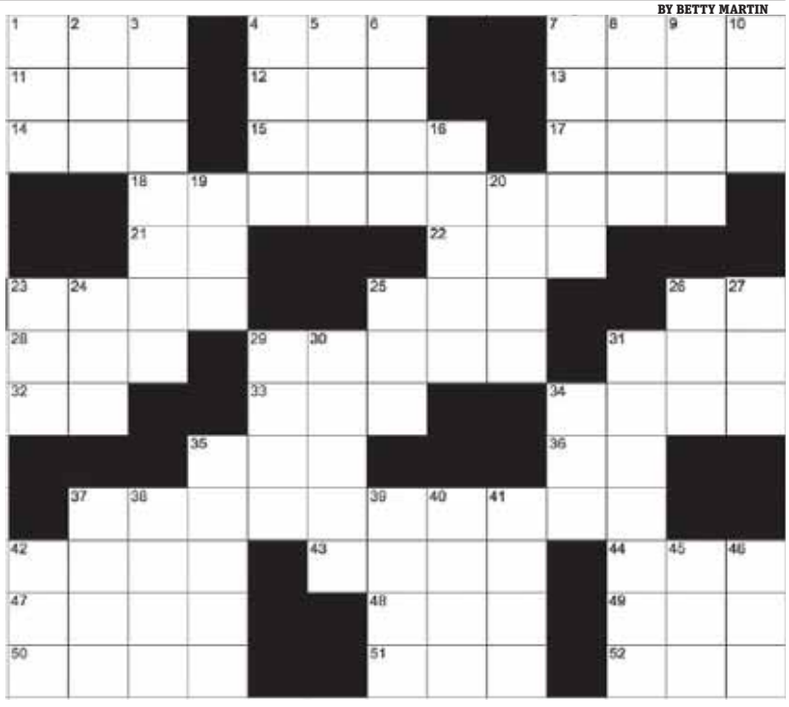
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You may be a bit more reclusive than usual today and over the weekend but there is no need to worry about it. You're not withdrawing from the world, you're just getting your thoughts and feelings in order.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You seem to be having doubts about something that only a few days ago you thought was the best idea in the world. The good news is your doubts will pass very quickly and then you can get on and make it happen.

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword

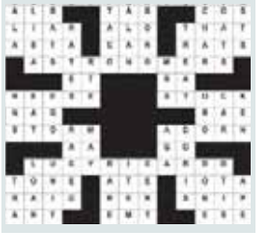
BY BETTY MARTIN



Across
1. Fishing need
4. To and —
7. Catch sight of
11. Silkworm
12. Make tracks
13. Desire
14. Schedule abbr.
15. Sale condition
17. Garfield pal
18. Seafarer's beacon
21. Disco proof of age (abbr.)
22. Select
23. Flintstone pet
25. Before
26. Magnum, P.I.'s pilot buddy
28. School subj.
29. — Acres
31. Cruise setting
32. Emergency room personnel (abbr.)
33. — Lingus
34. Smack a fly
35. Tavern brew
36. "Dirty Harry" actor (init.)
37. Eastern prov.
42. Cloak
43. Fashion magazine
44. Scottish cap
47. Barbra's "Funny Girl" co-star
48. Be indisposed
49. View
50. Hide
51. One of The Three Stooges
52. Family tree member (abbr.)

Down
1. Soak flax
2. Globe
3. Ringing up, old style
4. Flown at the 2012 Olympic games
5. Poison ivy result
6. Exclude
7. Whoop
8. Pea jackets
9. Mayberry boy
10. Casual top
16. Sandcastle spot
19. Wedding vows
20. Diner sign
23. German article
24. Quaint hotels
25. According to
26. Afternoon gathering
27. Garfield, for one
29. Elaborate party
30. Actress Witherspoon
31. Spring or Fall clothing
34. Chem. or biol.
35. Deviate
37. Point a finger at
38. October birthstone
39. Type of chowder
40. Stew
41. Prefix with confidence
42. Officer of the peace
45. Yes, to Angus
46. Actor Gibson

Yesterday's Crossword



What's online

See today's answers metronews.ca/answers.

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

7		8	9				4	
		3			2			1
		1			6	3		
				3		5	8	
	9	6		5				
		9	7			6		
6			8			7		
	2				4	1		5

Yesterday's Sudoku

4	8	7	6	9	2	1	3	5
6	5	3	4	7	1	8	2	9
9	2	1	3	8	5	4	6	7
8	6	5	7	1	4	2	9	3
3	7	9	5	2	8	6	1	4
2	1	4	9	3	6	7	5	8
5	3	8	2	6	7	9	4	1
1	9	6	8	4	3	5	7	2
7	4	2	1	5	9	3	8	6

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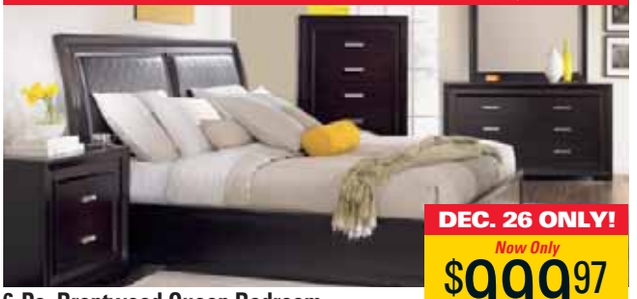

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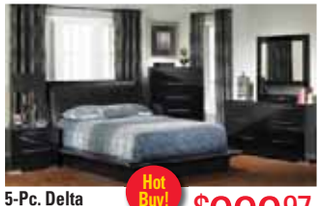

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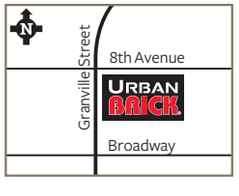

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